

PUNCH

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AFTER that *Evening News* article on local government reorganization which began by warning Londoners that they "may well be electing their last London County Council," the *News Chronicle* headline "Atom Cloud Over Europe" followed tellingly.

CHARIVARIA

WHILE popular headlines were rushing to jubilate over an imminent Summit *The Times* was pleasingly restrained with its note that the U.S. "appeared to be" moving towards "qualified acceptance" of "preliminary diplomatic exchanges." Undoubtedly *The Times* has the right idea. The longer the thing can be stretched out, either at this end or the other, the longer the world can bask in the delusion that something may come of it.

SOME concern is felt in Sydney over the importation of Japanese "drinking bird" toys activated by quantities of ether sufficient to put a small child into a coma. A few harassed mothers are asking where they can get one.

THERE ARE no measures too strong to deal with the present wave of destructiveness, and the authorities of Basildon New Town have decided that persons



found damaging the town's community halls "will be debarred from using them."

REPORTS from Stockholm that Tommy Steele is "Mr. Britain to the Swedes" have been received sourly by Mr. Robin Douglas-Home.

MALAYAN determination to strike off the imitative shackles of imperialism has been freshly demonstrated by a report that the country is to have debutantes next year—"Fifty girls will be presented to King Abdul in the cream and gold ballroom of his palace in Kuala Lumpur." Several Mayfair mothers are in agonies of indecision over whether to emigrate.

ADMIRERS of the British judicial system thrilled to the report about the woman at West London Court who



refused to let the police take her fingerprints, and the magistrate's polite request that she should change her mind. It was a pity that he went on to point out that if she didn't he could order her to, anyway.

This New Statesman

"WANTED, chess and/or table tennis partners for friendly games in afternoon or evening in Hampstead Garden Suburb. Socialist views . . ."—*New Statesman*

THE ASSERTION by Mr. Macmillan that if peace is indivisible "so is prosperity" didn't go down terribly well with the T.U.C.

Song for the Leader of the L.C.C.

OH, HAPPY electoral day
That bore such acceptable fruit
And gave me the title to say
As I welcome each Labour recruit
"I am monarch of all I survey;
My Left there is none to dispute."



Punch Diary

THEORETICALLY it is easily understandable, indeed obvious, that the sales of articles on which purchase tax is increased go down while those on which it is decreased go up. But in practice, thinking of the customer as an individual rather than in the mass, I find the process mysterious. At least, I find it fifty per cent mysterious. The sales resistance part of it is explicable, as a manifestation of ordinary human nature. I feel myself that this is not the time to go out and buy oil-heaters, wicker shopping-baskets or protective helmets; it is so annoying not to have bought them last week. Much more difficult to understand is why people who have struggled along up to this point without fur headgear, walking sticks and umbrella stands should now be unable to resist the opportunity. Yet can anyone doubt that the manufacturers of these items are rubbing their hands and planning extensions to their premises? Similarly, there must be hundreds of men all over the country firmly determined on a bout of wallpapering, followed by a well-earned rest on their brand-new garden furniture with a glass of heavy wine at their elbow. It is this that I find so strange. Surely the explanation cannot be that people put off buying things until they can afford them?

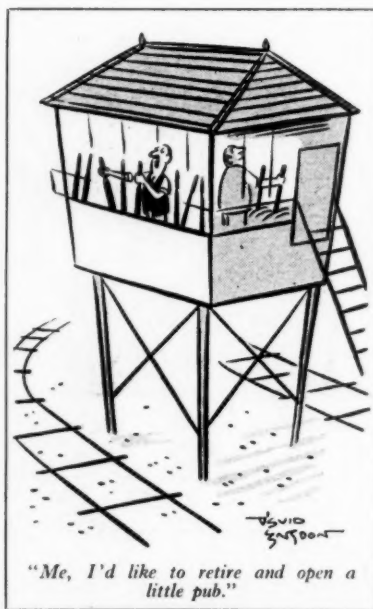
Grandmars Boy

THAT casual remark of Mr. Arthur C. Clarke's, made at a conference on space travel the other day, "I feel certain that many of you in this hall to-day will have grandchildren who will not be born on earth," carries some curious implications. There will be

difficulties over the entries in the birth certificate—not so much the place as the date. Mothers will find it hard, at first, to keep a proper check on baby's weight. Other oddities suggest themselves; the imagination plays momentarily, without much pleasure, on the notion of a maternity space-suit. But the oddest, and in a way the least welcome, thought prompted by Mr. Clarke's prophecy is that the first Moon-calves and Martians to visit us will in all probability be our own kith and kin. This, after all the work done by imaginative writers, will be a sad let-down. "Those who have never seen a living Martian," wrote H. G. Wells in his patronizing way, "can scarcely imagine the strange horror of its appearance," and he went on to describe the fleshy beak, the absence of nostrils, the sixteen slender, almost whip-like tentacles "arranged in two bunches of eight" that distinguished these people at a glance from normal Earth-men. The only utterance recorded (near South Kensington) from these interplanetary visitors was a wailing "Ulla, ulla, ulla, ulla." It will be disappointing, after this, to be greeted by one's first real Martian with an off-hand "Hi, granpop!"

Department Department

ACCORDING to the Institute of Education Students' Association



"Me, I'd like to retire and open a little pub."

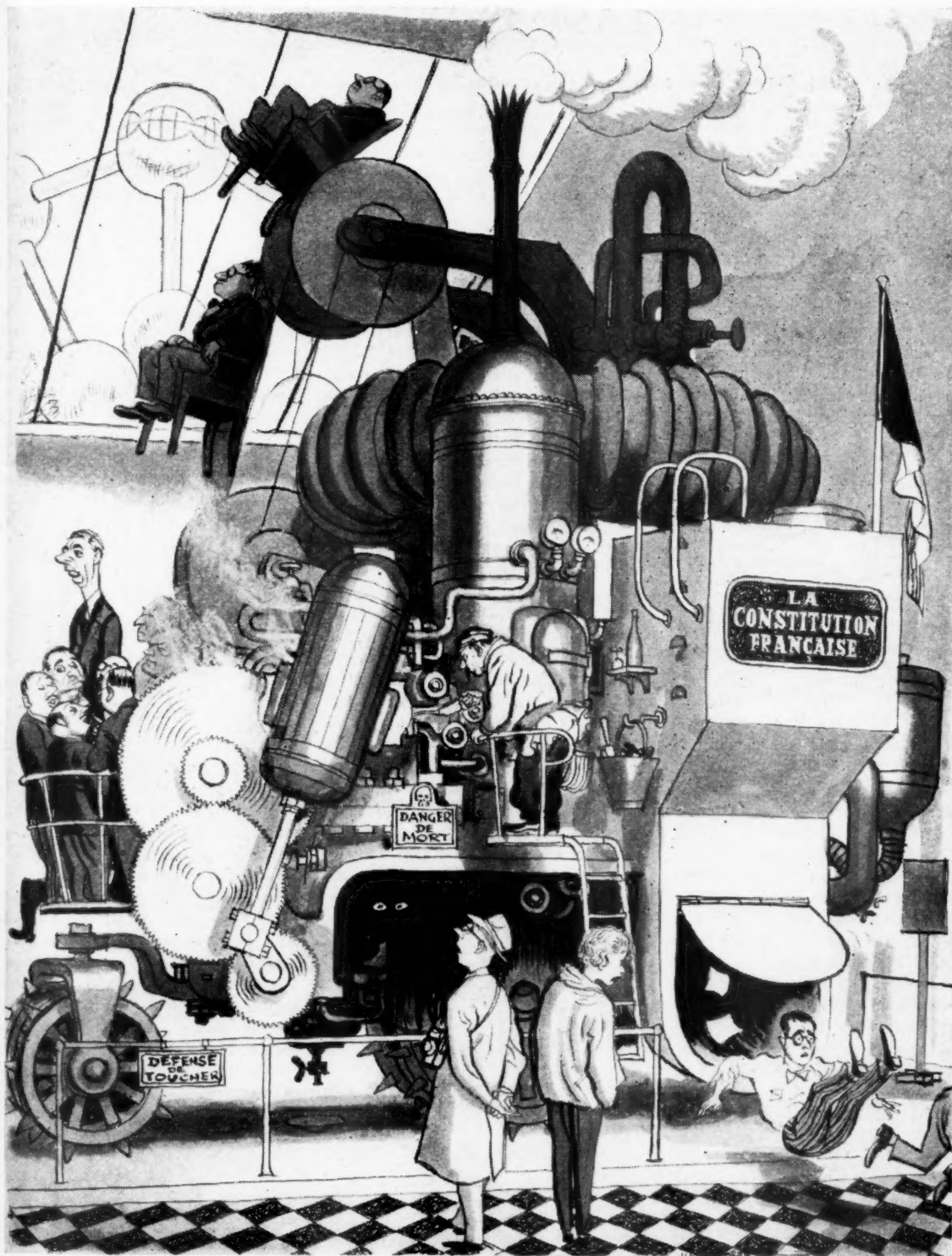
quite dreadful things happen in Women's Training Colleges. There are fines for running in the corridors. The girls have to be in so early at night they cannot go to theatres. They are not allowed to use ball-point pens. I do not know whether they are forbidden make-up, modern novels and the use of slang. Do girls' schools reduce their pupils to such docility that it lasts? The contrast between the reaction of men and women to higher education is disturbing. The girl who puts up with having to ask the Principal's permission before she can stand for office in a Student Society seems unlikely to instil in her pupils independence of mind, love of adventure or even common sense. Are they blackmailed into the submissiveness of Victorian governesses by the threat of taking their grants away? As the grants come from public funds the public might do more to protect its investments from imitation Florence Nightingales.

Skyscraper on Speedwell

THE City of London is rubbing its hands over the extent of the rebuilding since it was decided that keeping the heart of the capital derelict could be overdone. Seventy per cent of the building lost is on the way to being replaced. There are to be upstairs car-parks and all sorts of wonders. But the views are going and soon the agoraphobe will be happy and the claustrophobe sad. The bomb-sites are going and with them the herbs. Whatever damage local authorities have done to the concept of a Green Belt, just for a few years the Green Belt, with irreparable damage to the metaphor, came right into London. Soon the excessively visible lives of the modern office-worker will be flourishing on bombed sites where, in 1945, well over a hundred flowering plants and ferns were recorded. Couldn't one or two more office blocks have been decentralized, pushed off down the line, so that spring could continue to burgeon within sight of St. Paul's?

Budget Price Changes

Some of the advertisements in this issue of *Punch* were printed before the Budget, which may have affected the prices quoted. You should make sure from your retailer or from the advertiser direct what is the present correct price.



FRENCH PAVILION

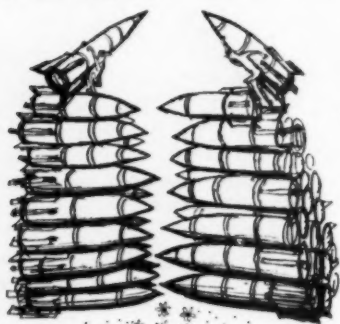
EAST IS WEST . . .

A Christian attitude to the discussion of the cold war and the menace of nuclear weapons

MEET FEAR WITH FAITH

By FATHER TREVOR HUDDLESTON

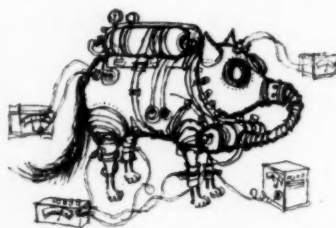
A HUNDRED years ago Emily Brontë could sing: "No coward soul is mine, No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere: I see Heaven's glories shine, And Faith shines equal, arming me from Fear." But "the



world's storm-troubled sphere" of her poetic vision was in fact a world of almost unimaginable security—at least for an Englishman. It was a world cradled in the Pax Britannica: a world in which the great continents of Africa and Asia were learning (if they hadn't learnt already) what the values of Western civilization could mean: a world in which the Industrial Revolution foreshadowed the leisure, the bounty and the far-stretching horizons of wealth for all. Moreover it was a world, at least for an Englishman, in which although religion was under fierce attack from the "progressive" thinkers, its moral and ethical standards were the foundation of family life and so of the social order. It was a safe world. And, safest of all, was England: rich and growing richer every day: strong and growing stronger: at peace, and able apparently to remain so, whatever happened elsewhere. And if there was fear at all it was easily quieted by faith: faith in a God who bore the unmistakable characteristics of English decency and sportsmanship. In fact

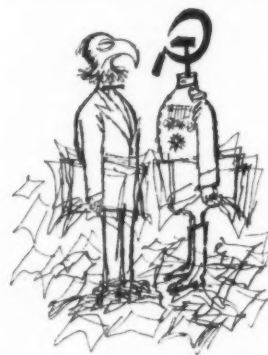
Emily Brontë would seem to be making a song about nothing; allowing her poetic fancy to run away with her. "The world's storm-troubled sphere" was a good enough place for most Englishmen to live in in 1848.

But it would be a bold man who claimed to be "no trembler" to-day. And it is at the risk of platitude that one dares to name the causes of man's fear in 1958. We have grown so accustomed to living with fear itself that we have lost the art or the skill of imagining a world free from it. And the primary cause of all our fear is, of course, the dread of war which will indeed "end all war" because it will end civilization itself. Humanity, I suppose, has often believed itself to be standing at the cross-roads in a final and ultimate sense. To-day it really is. As Sir Stephen King-Hall has said in his prophetic book, *Defence in the Nuclear Age*, "The junction which we have reached is unprecedented in character because it marks the point of no return. One road leads to survival, to peace, and to a degree of material prosperity and human leisure through the use of nuclear energy never known to man; the other



leads to death and destruction. To-day we are marking time at the junction; perhaps sidling perilously near the turning to death." Put more simply and more starkly, in the language of the headlines, we face the choice between the Hydrogen Bomb and Zeta: and although we want to choose Zeta there

seems to be something—perhaps someone—pushing us, pulling us, compelling us to stretch out our hands to the dreadful alternative. It is peace that we long for. And we cannot conceive that our



fellow-citizens in Russia or America long for anything else. But every year, every month almost, sees us adding to our armoury the kind of weapons which, inescapably, increase the risk of the immediate extinction of the human race. It is disarmament that we desire. It is an arms-race, costly beyond imagination, that we get. And yet we long for peace. And we know too that this longing is shared by the politicians: that it simply is not true to-day to claim a division between those who lead and those who are led—even though both seem to be in mortal danger of falling into the ditch. For somehow we are all caught in this dilemma which seems impossible of resolution—"when I speak unto them of peace, they make them ready to battle." It is significant, I believe, that the policy-word of these years of the cold war is "Deterrence." For deterrence is a negative concept. And we have now come to the point where we build our hope of peace on the sole foundation of fear. It is not the H-bomb which itself is to prevent the final and ultimate disaster.

It is the fear of it: the dread of it: the imagining of a world burnt to ashes and of the apocalyptic horror preceding its last moments. It seems to me that if this is how we understand "maintaining the balance of power": if this is how, in the years that lie ahead, our children are to learn what peace means, it will be very hard indeed to present a philosophy of life which makes any sense at all. Somehow, someone has to break through the fear-barrier if a policy for peace which is adequate to the dignity of human nature is ever to be found and built upon.

If what I have written is at all a true statement of our present condition and of the causes of it, then it follows that the real conflict in the world is not a conflict between East and West but a conflict between fear and faith. And if that seems too "simplistic" an explanation I can only say that I believe a return to simplicity is an essential element in any constructive thinking for the future. But perhaps I may be allowed to become more personal. For I have at least had some experience at first hand of the paralysing effect upon positive political action of fear itself. The whole problem of race-relations in countries like the Union of South Africa and the Central African Federation is basically a problem of fear. In this case it is the haunting dread of a white minority that it will be overwhelmed, will totally lose its identity in a black flood. And the reaction to this fear is a policy of repression, often rationalized in one way or another, which is aimed directly at forestalling any possibility of African ascendancy. The



policy of Apartheid is really a policy of fear. The doctrine of White Supremacy which it sustains is really a policy of fear. And so the kind of legislation, the social customs, the racial approach to every topic of conversation—all these things create a pattern of

society for the European in Southern Africa which is as unreal and artificial as it could be. Perhaps its unreality does not matter very much. But the effects of a policy based upon it matter supremely to the rest of Africa, and, I would say, to the rest of the world. They matter just as much in the long run (and it will not be so very long) as did the racial policies of Hitler. But you cannot



hope to change those policies—at least in a country like South Africa—unless you understand that they are the fruit of fear. You cannot hope for a more realistic approach to racial conflict unless you are prepared to attack its causes: and its causes are irrational—fear and the prejudice which fear inevitably creates. It is this which makes the race-problem in South Africa seem so hopeless of solution. For how can any Government come to power which will have the ability to banish fear from the hearts of men?

Yet, without this, how can any policy for peace be evolved?

This is the dilemma of Southern Africa. But it is also, in a different context, the dilemma of the Western world.

To look ahead, even five years, is an almost impossible task. It is so, if for no other reason, because of the swiftness of political change in such areas as the Middle East: because of the fantastic speed of scientific advance: because of the suddenness with which a shift in power can come about as a result of some new discovery.

But one factor which remains depressingly constant is the vast disparity in wealth between West and East. It is impossible to imagine that in five years' time the millions in Asia and Africa whose average income is £20 per head per annum to-day will have so raised their standard of living that it comes within

measurable distance of a Western standard just ten times as high. Certainly it is impossible to imagine any rise in the standard of living in Asia and Africa at all if the West is still pouring all its resources into the maintenance of a "deterrent." My point is that if fear is the chief cause of our present distress, poverty (for the majority) and luxury (for the minority) is a very close competitor.

And so long as our world is directed by fear and poverty there can be no hope of peace. And we in the West must take a very large share of the blame for this predicament.

It is easy enough for an amateur to make a fool of himself in such a discussion as this. But the Christian must not be afraid of being thought a fool. And if his solutions appear naïve and impractical it may be that this is not always due to his folly but to the fact that he lives in and speaks to a fallen world. Whether foolish or not, I believe that there is only one way to break through the vicious circle which now seems so impenetrable.

It is to meet fear with faith. It is to renounce nuclear weapons because *they are essentially evil*: it is to meet the needs of the have-not countries by *voluntarily* accepting a lower standard of life for ourselves: it is to acknowledge both in word and deed that "partnership" between White and Black in Africa can come about only when the European is humble enough to *serve* the non-European: it is to say to the Communist "We have a religion which can withstand all attack, and which, in spite of our own failures in the profession of it, has an eternal validity, therefore we are not *afraid* of yours": it is to return to the rock whence our Western civilization is hewn—the rock of the Christian Faith which proclaims the righteousness of God and the dignity of Man.

But it is to a Faith at whose heart is the Cross that we return.

The greatest need of the West is penitence.

The views expressed in this series do not necessarily represent those of PUNCH. Other contributors will be:

Dr. J. BRONOWSKI
ALISTAIR COOKE
D. ZASLAVSKI (of Krokodil)



"Complete with one free service after the first five hundred megawatts."

Other People's Dogs

By H. F. ELLIS

I DO not know how the law stands about gates in relation to other people's dogs. There are no gates at my address, because wind and weather and careless drivers of cars have combined to remove them, but even if there were gates it is doubtful whether anyone would bother to shut them. So the absence of gates seems to me to be not one of the *res gestæ*. The point at issue is whether it is my responsibility to exclude other people's dogs from the premises by erecting dog-proof barriers, or whether the other people should restrain their dogs from entering my property however wide open to intruders it may lie.

One dog in particular has raised this question from the purely theoretical to the level of a live, practical issue. The dog is called Grog or Rug—some

sharpish monosyllable; precision on the point is unimportant, for the dog answers to no name whatever, nor to any other conceivable command or entreaty. It is large, droll, and fond of adopting a position with front feet splayed apart and hindquarters higher than its head. In this position it is ready for a romp. No more light-hearted or fun-loving animal ever lived. It regards any human gesture as an invitation to Leap-frog, Lads a Bunchum or any other form of old English outdoor revelry. Approach it with a besom and fierce cries of "Go home, Jug," and it will crouch, leap six feet sideways, speed round the lawn in a tight circle and finish with its paws on your shoulders and a friendly lick. Lovable, trusting and harmless, it has all the virtues, except that like many human

neighbours it pops in uninvited and has no idea when to go. It can hardly be accused of disobedience since the notion that it is being ordered to do this or that clearly never crosses its mind. It simply looks in, sniffs about to see what's new, pinches any food left about for the birds, and if shouted at or chased welcomes the opportunity for a romp. When hungry or bored it goes.

I have tried to look up the law on this situation. It is not that we are at all litigious as a family, or would dream of taking Trig to court, but it is as well, before making a complaint, to find out where you stand. It would be awkward if the dog's owners were able to reply that it was *we* who were guilty of negligence through failure to repair our gates; the law has its oddities, and it

would not greatly surprise me to learn that it is a tort to provide a means of access to property on which a neighbour's chattel may injure itself through excessive romping. Who would ever have dreamed, for instance, that if a bull is being taken to market with all due care and escapes into a china shop, the animal's owner will not be liable for the result?

I got that out of a little book called *The Law*, which is my authority on these matters, and it shows how careful you have to be. Obviously the law expects the owners of china shops to make them bull-proof. Why should it not equally expect me to make my property Trug-proof? Both an ox and a dog are *mansuete naturæ* in the eyes of the law, which makes a sort of link for those who understand what it means. On the other hand an ox is "cattle" and a dog is not,* which confuses the issue because there are special laws about cattle trespass and no special laws (so far as my book tells me) about dog trespass. The law does not seem to be interested in simple trespass by dogs. If the creature does damage, yes; but even then the plaintiff must prove that the dog was acting "contrary to its nature." What use is that to me? Am I to go to Willesden or Bow Street or one of those places and plead that Grog was acting contrary to its nature in pinching the blue tits' fat? The plain truth is that the only thing Plug does that is contrary to the nature of dogs is to be so infernally friendly and gay. "The gravamen of the complaint, your Worship, is that the animal is so roguishly winning that my client cannot bring himself to fetch it a tremendous wallop with a broomstick . . ."

It is difficult to see how that sort of smear is going to stick. Apart from anything else, the Bench knows that only reasonable and necessary force is justifiable when expelling a trespasser. "Beating an otherwise inoffensive trespasser senseless," as my law book well says, "would be unjustifiable and a battery." So it would. To beat a sweet old thing like Tog at all would be unforgivable; to beat him senseless would be a work of supererogation.

So where am I now? There is a note about the Dogs Act, 1906, under which

the owner of a dog worrying sheep or poultry may be proceeded against without proof of *scienter*, but I doubt if the Act could be extended to cover dogs that merely worry *me*. I have looked up "Nuisances" and fallen back in disarray before the difficulty of proving that this dog's incursions affect my health or comfort. It does nothing of the kind. I simply don't want it to be continually dropping in. If we wanted a dog about the place we should buy one. This arrested and all-but nameless canine (I shouted "Jock!" at it once, and thought for a moment it had half turned its head) got upstairs on one occasion and took up its romping position in a bedroom. That was going too far, and we complained about it. Well, anyway, we rang up the owners and said "I say, you know this dog of yours?"

"You mean Wog?" they said. "Yes?"

"Well, it's up here in our bedroom. With its hindquarters higher than its head, as usual."

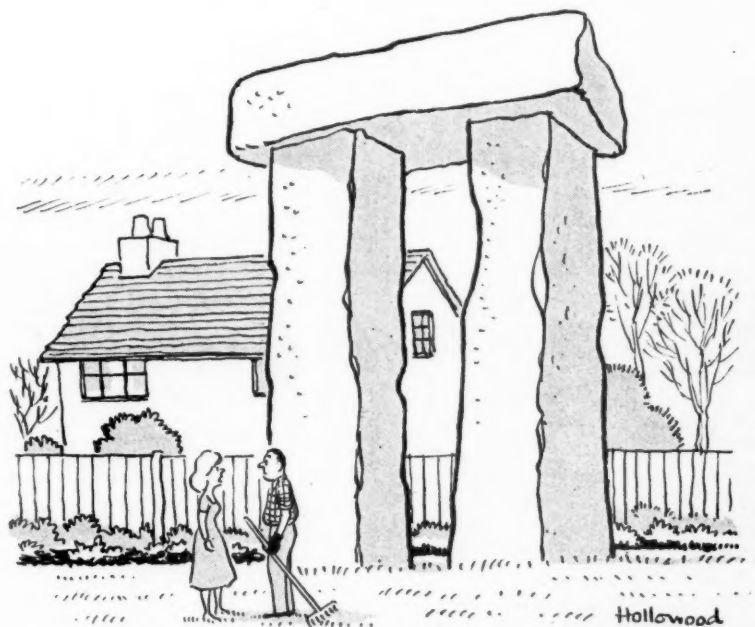
"Oh, but he *can't* be," they said. "He's here in the hall now."

"He's a great chap," we said, and that was the end of it, more or less. I don't see that anything was gained, except to prove that a playful dog can get from

our bedroom to a house three hundred yards down the road quicker than we can get to the telephone. And there's the whole problem in a nutshell. It's useless to complain unless you really feel indignant, and how can you feel indignant when what you really feel is a great tide of sympathy for Grog's owners? There they are, a nice couple by the look of them, with this lovable great millstone of theirs perpetually round other people's necks. They can't have a moment's peace. Always they must be worrying about whom he is worrying now. And what can they do about it? It is no good saying they could get rid of the dog, because that is the one thing you can't do with Mug. They could try training him to stay in his own garden, if they had a year or two to waste. Or they could, conceivably, remember to keep their gates shut. But that is not a point on which, for one reason or another, we care to prompt them.

"MR. MACMILLAN SEES GEYSERS"
Daily Telegraph

Daren't say so, naturally.



"But if we return them now we're admitting to the world that great-grandfather Henderson betrayed his trust as an antiquarian."

*The distinction should not be taken for granted. Poultry are "cattle," despite an obvious shortfall in the number of their legs.

The Cheques Act Under Fire

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

AT this time of the year I am apt to remember Browning's lines about oh and being in England now that April, etc., and one result is that I become wardrobe-conscious. I am not really much of a dresser, but I like to splash occasionally on socks and tartan shirts and the odd pair of flannels. New clothes do something for me. All the ads. for male clobber depict men of roughly my age-group, men who use the term clobber, tall and experienced men with groovy cheeks, greying temples, shooting-sticks and the figures of crack athletes, and even the fact of having to get the trousers let out a little doesn't completely ruin the illusion of belonging to this devilishly handsome fraternity.

This year I bought my spring outfit at a shop in Holborn. The young man at the counter got off to a bad start by disputing the length of my inside leg which has been thirty-two inches for as long as I can remember, and I can't believe that there's enough strontium

about yet to make a difference of a whole inch.

"You can have thirty-two, sir," he said, "if you like, but I can't answer for the consequences."

"Measure it again," I said firmly. And once more I submitted to the indignity of having this sideburned lout stretch his tape between bifurcation and instep. This time though I got up on my toes and gathered my trousers very close indeed to my person.

"Thirty-one dead," he said, looking up. He made no comment when I asked for a heavy hunting Cameron shirt, and he volunteered the information that the two pairs of grey socks I selected (they were made of something called "Nacryl" and "Urylon") would "wear like iron." But he upset me again by producing a shiny, skimpy, sleeveless tennis-looking affair when I asked for a cricket shirt.

"Eleven, thirteen, four," he said.

"Will you take a cheque?" I asked, and gave him a good mark when he

replied "Certainly, sir," without lifting his head from his pad and pencil.

I handed him the cheque.

"Would you mind writing your name and address on the back?" he said.

Now I have been campaigning privately against this ridiculous commercial convention for some months. To me it seems monstrous that these petty bureaucrats of the department stores should expect a man who is obviously a gentleman and whose inside leg has just been measured inaccurately to waste time by writing out his name and address every time he is involved in a simple shopping transaction.

"I will do no such thing," I said, "I see no point in it."

"It's customary, sir," said the assistant.

"Not with me, it isn't," I said. "I have signed my name on the face of the cheque, I have taken the trouble to fill in your name, the name of your employers, and I have added the date. I write no more."



"Then I'm afraid I cannot make a sale, sir," he said. "The shop has a rule about cheques, and it's more than my place is worth. Would you come to see the departmental manager?"

I tried to explain to the departmental manager that any man criminal enough to write a dud cheque would also be criminal enough to give a phony address, that it was bad for his business to suspect his customers of dishonesty, that one of the things wrong with British industry to-day was the unbelievable stupidity of its marketing methods and selling practice.

"First you doubt my inside leg measurements," I said, "and then you accuse me of passing a worthless cheque."

The manager said I was making serious charges and insisted on another exercise with the tape. Then, triumphant, he asked to see my driving licence.

"If you object, sir, I'll write the address myself, sir," he said.

"I'll be damned if I'll show you my driving licence," I said. "Tell me what possible reason you could have for seeing it."

The manager looked at the assistant—with a very odd look it seemed to me—and there was a short and awkward break in the conversation. Then, smiling broadly, the manager ran the palm of his hand over the garments waiting to be wrapped, and said:

"Suppose, I say, sir, that because we value your custom we would like to keep your name on our files and send you our regular monthly fashion circular. Suppose I said that we like to keep in touch with better-class customers and keep them informed about sartorial matters. And suppose I said that we can't do all this unless we have their proper addresses."

"That," I said, "would be a different matter entirely. Why didn't you say so in the first place?"

"I knew you'd understand, sir," said the manager. "Thank you, sir. Everything to your satisfaction, sir? Good-day, sir."

I began to write my name on the back of my cheque.

"Oh, by the way, Martyn," said the manager from the door, "give the gentleman a thirty-two. That tape-measure of yours isn't absolutely fool-proof."



"Yanks, go home—Yanks, go home—Yanks, go home: what else can we expect but unemployment."

Careers Masters Please Note

*"Britain's newest Man of the Moment, Mr. Sidney Greene,
General Secretary of the crisis-torn N.U.R."*

—Daily Express

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

AT the time of writing I know no more about Mr. Greene than this quotation reveals. But his dossier is now being feverishly compiled in a dozen newspaper offices, and at the time of reading you, and the world, will know that he is married with two dogs, favours the two-button suit, hates rubber-tyred wheelbarrows and hopes his pools will come up soon. He will also, by then, have reached the TV millions with his catchphrase: "Within the over-all structure of the trade union movement." Fame undreamed of lies within his grasp. Will he grasp it?

Up to now the stars of trade unionism have shared with the stars of management a somewhat fumbling approach to personal publicity. How is it that Mr. F. C. Hooper, though constantly on our screens, has still not actually taken part in a Royal Command Variety Performance, or received the accolade of a colour supplement on his House and Garden? Lord Nuffield, whose

recent ploy for the sympathies of the family saloon owner shows that he knows a gimmick when he sees one, has yet to be blown up on the hoardings saying "Take Tuffet's for Youthful Feet." Perhaps Mr. Sidney Greene, or even Mr. Bill Webber (Salaried Staffs) or Mr. Bert Hallworth (Locomen), will at last become the Complete Celebrity, demonstrating to management and labour alike that Fame is When You Grab It—though of course the time will come, as he should realize, when you have to let go.

Who remembers now the short, glittering reign of Laurie Sopp (Amalgamated Sandwichmen)? Mr. Sopp began life as just another sandwichman, up and down the Strand with railway lost-property boards fore and aft. He had not expected to fly to Geneva, give his views on modern sculpture over the phone to William Hickey, meet young actresses, tell Cabinet Ministers on the B.B.C.'s "Home and Abroad"

where they got off. But you never know, to-day. When the precarious balance of national affairs was suddenly seen to be hanging on the sandwichmen—it had leaked out that railway finances were as dependent on lost property as the cinema is on iced lollies—the name Sopp was suddenly on everyone's lips. Conversation on the morning train sounded like a thousandfold amplification of an activated breakfast cereal. "SOPP: 'WE STRIKE IF—'" boomed the headlines. "DOOR STILL OPEN SAYS SOPP."

At this time the situation's possibilities had not struck him. When Sam Brimmer, a go-ahead publicity practitioner of Dean Street, W., found him, he was walking the Strand as usual, his boards on his back. Rejecting after a mere flicker of consideration the possibility of a story on this, the horrified Sam himself lifted the boards from Sopp's narrow shoulders. "No more of those, boy," he said tenderly. "Finish." And that afternoon the general secretary of the Amalgamated Sandwichmen was in his rightful place, a penthouse at Claridges', with a press conference called for three-thirty sharp. The evening headlines were full of him, with a difference:

"TURN-UPS ON WAY OUT, SAYS SOPP
Wasteful, Insanitary

In a slashing attack on men's trousers to-day, Mr. Laurence Sopp, key man in the crisis-torn sandwichmen's organization . . .

And overnight he was established as a fashion pundit. The morning gossip columns carried close-ups of his waistcoat buckle, ringed in charcoal and captioned "Teeth grip material firmly." A queue of nine hundred formed outside the War Department Surplus shop where he bought his boots. Agencies thronged, begging him to sponsor surgical stockings, hearing-aids and tinned soups; to sign cricket bats, open exhibitions of Dominican folk-art, appear in "Panorama." Clem Davies (as he then was) invited him to stand for the Liberals. Reporters fought through the police cordon asking him to confirm or deny that he was engaged to Sabrina.

At first he had doubts. When he had taken his first step on the ladder of fame long ago (picketing a Villiers Street barber's suspected of employing a foreign sweeper-up at cut rates) he had had no thought of introducing the cabaret at the Café de Paris, wearing full evening dress and smoking several cigars. Was this really in the interests of world sandwichmen? He put it to Sam Brimmer. "Listen," said Sam—"had anyone heard of Amalgamated Sandwichmen before you got to be a

Personality? No. Has anyone *not* heard of them now?" Laurie nodded. It made sense. The reporter next in the queue behind his chair lent forward with his question. Was Mr. Sopp going to make an issue of the broader leather shoulder-strap and lighter board?

"Within the over-all structure of the trade union movement, yes," replied Sopp.

"Could you elaborate a little?"

"No comment," said Sam Brimmer.

Next morning's papers said, "BRIGHTER PROSPECTS IN STRAP ROW. GENERAL STRIKE LESS LIKELY—SOPP."

It was shortly after this that the end came. That Monday night, while Laurie was in the act of starring in "This Is Your Life," the centre of industrial unrest abruptly shifted. No one could quite say why. Economists related it loosely to the jute crop. Whatever the cause, it threw into sudden prominence a Mr. Bob Cacker (Asphalters and Paviers), and when Laurie, after the transmission, tried to cash a cheque in the V.I.P. lounge at Lime Grove the barman said he had never heard of him. "But I've just starred in 'This Is Your Life,'" protested Laurie. The barman glanced at the clock. "That was an hour ago," he said.

"Never mind, boy," said Sam Brimmer, as they went through the books together for the last time. "It's quick up and quick down these days, and make what you can while airborne. So long, then, I've got an appointment."

It was in the library of his small Cornish manor house the following weekend that Laurie, fondling a setter's silky ears, first saw his successor's name. "HAT-BRIMS ABSURDLY LARGE. CACKER FORETELLS CLOCHES FOR MEN THIS AUTUMN."

He was not sorry, and yet it had been worth it. He looked thoughtfully towards the grand piano, with its signed portraits of Wilfred Pickles, Denis Compton, Earl Attlee, Reg Butler, Glubb Pasha, Mortimer Wheeler, King Feisal, Christian Simpson, Dr. Bronowski, Winifred Atwell, Harold Macmillan, etc.

"FURNISHED Bed-sitter, cooker, hand basin, meter, gentleman, 30/-, Bristol 6."

Bristol Evening Post

Suit single lady?



"Been on TV before?"

*"Ballet or wedding?"*

Wife and Husband

By LORD KINROSS

A MAN'S place, in our well-ordered modern society, is in the home. The most dutiful husband I know in this respect is my friend John.

"I'm a lucky woman," his wife Jean says of him. "He works so hard to keep the house going that it's a pleasure to come home in the evenings. He's a wonderful cook: all men are. And what's more, he never even asks me for any housekeeping money."

From my experience of this ideal couple I believe this to be true. John and Jean live in a neat little house with a yellow door ("Our Wendy hut," she has been known to call it) in a cosy little street just off the Fulham Road. Their life provides a model for all that modern domesticity should be.

John is up punctually every morning to give Jean her breakfast before she goes to work, having laid the table in the kitchen the night before, and having stoked up the boiler to make sure that

the water will be hot for her bath. He leaves her in peace to read the paper as he eats his own, then embraces her and sees her off down the street with a cheerful wave, as she goes off, all smart and bright as from a band-box, to catch the Tube for Oxford Circus. A woman's place is in the office: she has a job as a buyer for one of the big department stores.

When she has gone John turns back to his household chores, gossiping a little to the daily woman who comes in to do the cleaning. They are lucky to have her. "I only like working for a gentleman," she says to John, with the wink of her species.

Then he dresses in his old fisherman's sweater and corduroy slacks. ("Not jeans," he says. "I prefer to get into something loose.") These are his working clothes: he is a free-lance journalist and his house, for purposes of income tax, is his office. ("Now I must be getting back to my husband's office,"

Jean often says jokingly as she leaves the store in the evening.)

Before settling down to work John has some telephone calls to make—to the Gas Board for a man to see to the air which keeps getting into burners on the cooker; to the butcher for a boiling fowl to be delivered to-morrow (he can make it last, in various forms, over the week-end); to the cleaners, who have not sent back Jean's dress, which she will need for a public-relations gala to-morrow evening.

As he writes he is disturbed by several welcome interruptions at the doorbell—from a Breton onion-seller, to whom he airs his French; from a man with a barrow, to whom he gives a pile of old newspapers; from a policeman, asking if that's his car outside—to which he replies jokingly that he wishes it were. With all he chats wittily on the doorstep.

Then, feeling the need for a mid-morning break, he goes out to the Mexican Café Espresso in the Fulham

Road, just round the corner. Here he finds one or two of his neighbours, other husbands at their elevenses, dressed casually in tartan bush-shirts and jeans. They talk of their mutual tasks, and of the price of this and that, and of their marital affairs.

The commercial artist with the beard complains that his wife is out of a job at the moment, so that she needs money, and moreover she hangs around in the house all day long, thus interfering with his work. The TV script-writer with the military moustache says his wife is on tour at the moment, so he has the place to himself for once. The antique dealer with the crew-cut, who has lately moved in, has left his wife to mind the shop and is taking a day off to cut out the loose covers and hemstitch the curtains.

John goes back home to finish off his day's work with the aid of a large gin-and-tonic, then gets himself some lunch, hotting up the left-overs from the

last boiling fowl with some rice and pimentos according to a recipe from one of the women's magazines. Then he settles down to read his latest article, which has just appeared in the magazine.

Jean meanwhile, caught up in the hurly-burly of the West End, is having her usual woman's hard day's work. After a morning of difficult interviews with wholesalers, she hurries off to an awkward business luncheon with a designer, then on to two dress shows and back to a tricky manager's conference, at which she only just contrives to get her way. She telephones John to say she will not be home till late-ish as she has to go to a cocktail-party at Grosvenor House to meet some foreign buyers. But she will get some snacks at the party, so he needn't trouble to prepare her an elaborate supper.

He has spent a busy afternoon, going out after his siesta to shop a little with a carrier-bag, buying some extra large potatoes which can be baked in the oven without having to be peeled; some baby carrots in a Cellophane packet which don't look as though they will need much cleaning; some Frankfurter sausages, which will be no trouble to hot up; a Camembert cheese, some slices of salami, and a

packet of Swiss soup. He strolls around the junk shops in search of household utensils, and picks up for three shillings a rather nice Doulton bowl, with a chip in it, which will do for salad. He buys a few daffodils at a stall and on his return spends a few minutes arranging them.

He finishes typing out his article, spends a busy twenty minutes in the kitchen preparing supper, then, putting on a tie, goes down the street to the house of the TV script-writer who, his wife being away working, has invited a few people in for drinks. He is invited to go on to another party later in Notting Hill Gate.

Jean gets home, still band-box smart but a little less bright.

"Delicious supper, darling," she says. "And how divinely you've done the flowers."

"We're invited to a party, darling," he says.

"You go, darling," she says. "I'm dead, flat out. I'm going straight to bed the moment I've finished my supper."

"You're sure you don't mind, darling?"

"Of course not, darling. You deserve a little relaxation after working so hard at home all day."

So out John goes.

Sometimes people ask Jean whether they intend to have any children.

"No little strangers yet awhile," she replies. "We'll have to wait till I get my rise. Then John'll be able to afford to cut down on his writing. At the moment, poor darling, he simply wouldn't have time to look after a baby."

Aye, There's the Dub

WHO said that present mirth hath present laughter?

Correct, of course—though Shakespeare's line has grown

A shade outmoded, or appears so after

A session spent with Jeannie, Brad and Joan;

For what these mirthful characters evoke

Is *past*, not present, laughter, canned and hoarded;

Laughter at some primeval, bearded joke;

Laughter dubbed in, tracked down and tape-recorded;

Laughter so ancient that it may have been

Uttered by me when young and overjoyed

At some cavortings on the silent screen

Of Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd . . .

Laughter unprompted; laughter plosive, pat;

No present mirth's as funny as all that. E. V. MILNER

CHESTNUT GROVE

Frank Reynolds, whose drawings appeared in PUNCH from 1906 to 1948, made a special study of the suburban household.



"GO ON ABOUT MUMMY."

November 2 1938

Toby Competitions

No. 13—Gadgets

THIS is the age of the gadget; a new one appears every week. Suggest a new gadget for use in the home or garden.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive Toby bookmarks. Entries (any number, but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom right-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, May 2, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 13, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 10 (Highly Esteemed Classic)

This was a tricky business; rendering a bit of *Titus Andronicus* in the Goons' idiom. The two art forms blended unhappily. Most competitors went all out to capture the spirit of the Goons, leaving little if any Shakespeare, but this, one feels, is not really what the Goons would have done. A minority who tried to keep something of the feeling of the original scarcely gave Eccles, Bluebottle and the rest a chance. Perhaps it was asking too much; clearly there was an uncomfortable note in some scripts that sought to marry the crude savageries of the play with the lunatic humour of the comedians. Easily first came:

DOUGLAS SWIFT

51 CLIFFORD ROAD
NEW BARNET, HERTS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MINNIE, Queen of the Goons.

VINNIE, a dumb blonde.

ECCLES and BLUEBOTTLE, sons to Minnie.

BLOODNOK, a Roman General (acting Major).

NEDDIE SEAGOONICUS, a Roman restaurateur.



"If you call me your little creature
comfort again I shall scream."

Prologue

Enter a clown with two pigeons

1ST PIGEON:

O hearken, groundlings all, and know
wherefore I am

Arrived to sort the Bacon from the ham,
And in amongst this senseless burbled
garbage

Ye may discern a spot of garbled
Burbage.

2ND PIGEON: Coo.

[Exit

SCENE: A Roman Chinese restaurant.

Enter omnes

NEDDIE SEAGOONICUS:

May it please you, try this steaming pie,
Wherein are they who left my daughter
in the soup;

And though that banquet be but new
begun,

They have their high desert, and you
have yours.

(Dies. Minnie cuts the pie.)

BLUEBOTTLE:

Teehee! My mother rashly has her son
beheaded,

Cut off in my first speech most cruelly
I'm deaded. (Dies.)

MINNIE:

I fear that Mistress Underdone, thy
cook,

Hath an excess of body in the gravy.
And yet here's one that seemeth but
half-baked.

ECCLES: Hullo.

MINNIE:

Let's hear how you survived, we need a
recap.

ECCLES:

Protected by my pink asbestos kneecap.
(Minnie dies.)

BLOODNOK:

'Twas surely hell in there. This
devilish deed

Unfitted quite the pie for human feed.
(Dies.)

ECCLES:

Okay, okay, I'll eat it all myself.
(Eats and dies.)

Epilogue

Enter a river

RIVER:

Thus antick gibes recoil upon the giber;
Weep not for them, they've fallen in the
Tiber. [Exit bearing bodies

D. G. Marriott, 1 Winterbourne Close,
Kings End Estate, Bicester, Oxon.,
ignored the plot and concentrated on a
solo effort by Bluebottle; as Tamora in
Act II, Scene 3:

My lovely Captain, why are you so sad
While everyone is digging it the most?
(Rock 'n' roll music)

The birds sing merrily with every rock
(Sound of Minnie Bannister singing)
Send snakehips Minnie giddy round the
clock.

As old Crun quivers with this red-hot
sound,

He knocks a candy sunshade on the ground.
(Sound of falling tree)

Under this sweet shade, Captain, let us sit,
And whilst the jiving Eccles rocks the
hounds,

And Bloodnok feeds the birds the well-
known corn

Of etchings and French postcards all at
once;



Sprad

"Miss, you forgot to put the sputnik
on the top."

Let us sit down and quiet the yelping
noise

By switching from the Light on to the
Third;

And finding how their precious gang
enjoys

The rotten deadings that the Bard employs.

Like several other competitors G. A. Redfern, 87b Barnsley Road, Sheffield 5, was more at home with his stage directions than with the dialogue. The scene-setting was promising:

PART THE THIRD: A dreaded part of the forest. (Enter dusky young lad wearing brass panther-stalking hat, white toga and shredded cardboard wig, bearing a leather-type bag containing certain monies).

Later this bag was put into a 60-ft. hole specially constructed by the Indian State 60-ft. Hole Digging Co. under the guidance of Mr. Bannerjee.

P. E. Cook, Knollside, Uplyme, Lyme Regis, Dorset, gave Titus a good line:

Then gaze into this bowl, dear friends,
ignore

The picture of a knife I've drawn upon
your throats.

A brief authentic echo came from A. B. Dow, 27 Upper Berkeley Street, Portman Square, London, W.1:

MESSENGER:

The Goths are marching on the castle.

TITUS:

Away! Then we must hide the castle.
Quick!

Toby bookmarks have been sent to competitors quoted.



Banana Boat

E. H. Shepard has spent the winter in a cargo boat going round the West Indies and up the Amazon, and describes his trip in words and drawings.

WE have survived the Bay of Biscay and in a few days we shall be back in Liverpool. I hope the hatches over the banapas have not become unstuck and the fruit wrecked by the change of temperature. It was at Trinidad—our homeward call; we'd been there once on the way out, Amazon bound—that we met the Bananas, with a capital B. Passengers may come and passengers may go, but nothing, I repeat NOTHING, must delay the progress of the Banana. He arrives at the Port of Spain in a special train and has a special machine for loading him; from the train to the lifter the shore mateys pass the bunches of bright green fruit, each wrapped in Cellophane. One man sits on top of the machine, ostensibly controlling it but usually asleep, another sprays each bunch as it passes, and the work goes on at the rate of a thousand bunches an hour. Once stowed below and battened down the

cargo is sealed from the air by wide strips of gummed paper pasted over the hatches—and kept rigidly at a temperature of 55 degrees Fahrenheit to stop the banana reaching its destination a rich, overripe black, instead of its proper daffodil colour. As a matter of

fact yellow, according to the banana-connoisseurs, is the wrong colour too; the fruit should be eaten when it is brown all over. All I know is that unripe banana tastes like felt.

The West Indian dockyard matey is a colourful fellow, with a flair for bright clothes—though not at work. I noticed that the man at No. 3 winch wore a cricket cap and not much else. Cricket in the West Indies takes the same place as soccer in England. A taxi driver in Barbados had shown me with pride the house where Everton Weekes lives.

Barbados had been our first port of call in the Caribbean. There was no deep-water accommodation, so we anchored outside Bridgetown and unloaded our cargo into barges. This meant removing a large red and green omnibus from the forehatch and putting it back again when the job was done. We had brought this from Liverpool,





and at Lisbon the Portuguese stevedores retired inside it to enjoy their mid-morning breaks. We got rid of it at Trinidad (along with some 20-ton excavators, horrid yellow things which caused endless delays because the only cranes that could lift them were along at the other end of the quay dealing with bauxite) and weren't sorry; after that there was room to set up our canvas swimming-pool, a thing of heavy timbers with a great canvas bag inside. Sometimes when the sea was choppy there was more water slopped outside the pool than left in it. We were at Bridge-town two days. The landing-stage in the Careenage was a medley of tourists, mostly American, in fancy costumes and strange hats. A steel band throbbed away. They say Trinidad bands are better, but Barbados does not think so.

We were twenty-four hours late sailing from Trinidad for the Amazon. The stevedores couldn't seem to keep their minds on the job. Next week was the Carnival, and they only wanted to sing calypsoes and dance on the fore-deck.

The Amazon is a yellow river; a dull, mouldy yellow. At the entrance its flat, distant shores are visible for miles. We put in briefly at Belem, its old fishing harbour vaguely reminiscent of Venice, and sailed on up the Para River, one of the Amazon's mouths, and the following day reached the main stream, yellower than ever. In the Narrows the islands lie close together; the ship twisted and turned through the channels

so near to the banks that a stone could have been tossed into the jungle. There are no buoys or marks of any kind; at night the only lights are from occasional scattered huts on shore. No wonder the Amazon pilots are said to be among the best in the world.

A thousand miles up river, and Manaus, our next stop, once a thriving town (during the rubber boom) and boasting an imposing opera house, designed on La Scala lines; it has a huge stage, a magnificent foyer, and is quite pathetic, a relic of former grandeur, faded and decaying like the town itself. Nuts are more important than opera now.

We not only loaded nuts, scooped into the hold in immense buckets, but a crew of Brazilian nut-minders, who would nurse them all the way back to England, their sole job being to turn them over continually to prevent mildew.

Below Manaus there is a dramatic sight. The Amazon joins the Rio Negro, one yellow and muddy, the other clear and black as ink. But "join" is hardly the word. They do not mix. To steam from one to the other is like crossing a frontier. Leaving the estuary for the open sea the phenomenon persists in another form; yellow Amazon, green sea; separate, like colours in a carpet.

At Manaus we had loaded a cargo of hides, and all the way to Lisbon, where we left them without regret, they were very much with us. Their scent was pungent. As we surged forward their smell surged aft, seeking out the dining saloon with special care. We gulped our meals and fled as quickly as possible. At Barbados the sugar came aboard in great brown sacks, and added its aroma to that of the hides in an unhappy collaboration. I felt more and more

attached to the Banana, scentless and inoffensive below.

We found a stowaway on board. He came to light after hiding by the funnel for three days. Perhaps the hides were even more pungent there. Apparently he had slipped aboard from one of the barges at Barbados, but as he had nothing to live on but a packet of cigarettes and a small bottle of water he had to give in. Since then he has been working under supervision, doing light duties about the ship. The crew are furious, as he enjoys all their amenities and only has to do unimportant jobs.

Nuts, hides, omnibuses, sugar—the yellow 20-ton excavators abandoned at Trinidad—bananas. Bananas. We got a "dusting" in the Bay. I hope the nut-minders are all right. But particularly the bananas. When they were loaded into their cool, 55-degree hold I stood on the promenade deck watching with the thermometer at ninety, and I would have gladly joined the bananas to escape the heat. Now they say it is going to be cold at home, and I may feel that I would gladly join them again to escape the frost. But in any case I do hope all is well with them. I should not like to think that all the hard work on the quay at Trinidad had been wasted, and our three-thousand-mile sea voyage had proved fruitless after all.



Hair Shirt

By CLAUD COCKBURN

The History of a Prophet of Doom

THE thing that had gripped and moulded the character and career of Bewdley-Lowndes was known only to George Carrick, who took it as a bit of a joke. By the time he found out what a big mistake that had been it was too late.

Early in the Lent Term of 1919—both of them being then twelve years old and at the same preparatory school—Bewdley-Lowndes, under pledge of secrecy, showed Carrick the notebook in which he, from time to time, entered the just few lines of projected epic poems and thoughts on life. The latest entry was headed "Aftermath: by E. Bewdley-Lowndes" and written in mauve ink—"for emphasis," Bewdley-Lowndes said. "Long weeks and months after the vawnted Armistice," it began, and continued on the theme that "despite the promises of potentates and Presidents, and the protestations of Premiers," regarding the new world that was to emerge from the "hollowcast of war"

nothing, in fact, had changed. "All is as before! Oh, shame! Oh, swindle!"

Given, for a while, to silence, Carrick presently asked what sort of changes Bewdley-Lowndes had in mind.

"Well, *something*," said Bewdley-Lowndes, stamping his foot in his vexation.

After prolonged speculation and discussion, in which both Clemenceau and Woodrow Wilson came in for a mauling as utter duds, Bewdley-Lowndes disclosed, with unshed tears of exasperation in his voice, that he had expected and believed, when the Armistice was proclaimed, that at the very least something would be done about these damned, damned, and double-damned woollen underclothes. He wriggled and scratched himself as he spoke.

Carrick was quick to agree that among the world conditions needing drastic change this matter of the "hair shirt" underclothes was about as urgent as anything could be. Whether, before the war, there had been a time when underclothes were not made of a material like malleable pumice-stone with bristles in it, nobody was old enough to remember.

To bitter complaints, and none more bitter than those of Bewdley-Lowndes, the Matron always replied "Don't you know there's a war on?" sometimes adding "What about the poor lads in the trenches, and you complaining of a bit of itch."

It was, no doubt, the weekly reiteration of these remarks which had so firmly established in Bewdley-Lowndes' mind an intimate connection between skin-rasping underclothes and the world conflict. More important, it had convinced him that, by a natural consequence, when peace returned "hair shirts" would be abolished along with militarism, injustice to small nations, the Defence of the Realm Act, certain types of pudding, and secret diplomacy. It was a touchstone: if "they" couldn't even change the underwear situation then they couldn't change anything. Their claims were bogus. He would believe there was a real peace "on," as Matron would say, when he saw a change on the undervest-and-drawers front.

When nothing happened on this front (Matron, damn her eyes, said "D'you suppose *that's* all they've got to think about, with the Peace and all to fix up, and the League of Nations and the Kaiser not even hung yet?") the shock and disillusion gave Bewdley-Lowndes a psychological trauma you could put your fist in.

Some years later, manufacturers did start producing woollen underclothes that were caressingly kind to the skin. But it was too late for Bewdley-Lowndes, who by that time had given up wearing woollen underclothes of any sort.

The shock and disillusion suffered in 1919 drove his mind along deep ruts of gloom and suspicion. At Oxford he was as cynical as a Divorce Court Judge. At that time he was still aware that it was those drawers and undervests that had warped him, but he had become coy of saying so to anyone but Carrick. Instead, he suggested that if everyone had been to Budapest, as he had, and met philosophers of the new Maddgenstein school, everyone would see the will-o-the-wisp futility of philosophy as taught at Oxford. Demonstrating a point of some sort, he got a fourth in Greats. A few people said he must be stupid, or lazy, or both. But many more saw that he could easily have taken a First had he not been a genius, and ahead of his time, along with Maddgenstein.

Later he travelled briefly, noting faked antique remains in Rome and hideous mendacity among German politicians. As for France, it was a Whited Sepulchre. He met Americans who told him—this was mid-1929—that their country had solved the problem of eternal prosperity. Bewdley-Lowndes itched all over and foretold the great crash. People said "You must have made a packet bearing that market." He had omitted to do so—what people took for amazing financial acumen was, in reality, a hunch based on tickling wool.

However, widespread reports of his astounding foresight *vis-à-vis* the crash helped to lever him into a brokerage office in the City. His air of portentously suspicious gloom fitted the mood of the 1930s like an undertaker's glove. When politicians said prosperity was "just around the corner" Bewdley-Lowndes would get his thumbs under his waistcoat and scratch, and tell colleagues in his



"I want one with a thinly-veiled accusation of malingering."

brokerage house that the depression was going on for years. It did, and his awed colleagues, watching him scratching and scowling, said "There isn't much you can teach Bewdley-Lowndes about business." Believing that he "knew it all" they made no attempt to teach him anything, so that, after years in the City, had there been an Honours Examination for brokers he would have got a Fourth.

He married—the girl was a friend of George Carrick who lived in the same Essex town of Exy, where George was now a leading solicitor and whence Bewdley-Lowndes travelled daily to London. Starry-eyed, she babbled to leading citizens, including George, about her husband's amazing knowledge of economic affairs and the world situation in general. George, unwilling to disillusion her by stating, as a fact known to him personally, that Bewdley-Lowndes was an ignoramus, fuelled simply by a high-octane subconscious memory of preparatory school underclothes, assured her, and leading citizens present, that he was a genius.

In the Army of World War II he rose fast—like a paradoxical diver—from the bottom towards the higher levels by the sheer, leaden weight of his appearance, manner and pronouncements. To have someone who reminded you simultaneously of the prophet Isaiah, Savonarola, and the death of Danton, going about as a mere lieutenant or even captain, upset people's sense of the fitness of things—made them uneasy. They conspired to get him promoted and posted elsewhere, and by war's end he was a Colonel, blundering about the Ministry of Supply and predicting that the politicians would soon foul up the peace.

Back at the brokerage office he comforted colleagues by looking as cynical about successive Governments, Labour and Conservative alike, as they felt. Sometimes, when Gaitskell or Butler struck a hopeful note, he would actually take off his jacket and waistcoat and scratch his spine with the fingers of both hands. And as hardly anyone in the City had much idea of what was going on, nobody noticed that Bewdley-Lowndes had none at all. He simply said over and over again that it was "all gas and humbug, nothing fundamental being done." They made him a partner.

His merits and qualities increased and multiplied in the eyes of his wife and, with the exception of George Carrick's, the eyes of the leading citizens of Exy. He was an attested leader of men. Captain of Finance, and—*qua* thinker—as deep as he was wide.

Privately, George said to him "Really makes me laugh how you've got away with it, old boy. You and I know you haven't had a new idea in your head since that disappointment about the hair-shirts struck you rigid. All done on itchy vests."

"That," said Bewdley-Lowndes, "strikes me as a joke in rather poor taste," but poor Carrick went on laughing until the night of the Great Alarm. That night, leading citizens—bank managers, trade union secretaries, lawyers, local industrialists and so on—were hurriedly summoned to meet the Mayor, who on the basis of code messages from London told them that World War III was due to erupt any minute, that it was officially expected that all national and inter-urban communications would be disrupted within an hour of the outbreak, and that every community must fend for itself.

"In this dire emergency," said the Mayor, "when the choice of the right man to take supreme control is a matter of life or death, I have no hesitation whatever in proposing that full and absolute powers to direct all activities in this Town be vested in . . ."

The words "Colonel Bewdley-Lowndes" were almost drowned in the outburst of applause. Applause turned to shocked and angry cries of "Shame!" and "Sit down!" as the voice of George Carrick, incoherent with dismay, was heard yelling "Not him, for pity's sake! He's all woolly drawers! He's only a stuffed hair-shirt!"

Police were called, and George was thus the first "undesirable element" to be gaoled under the Emergency Regulations introduced at the first immediate threat of World War III.



"I thought so—you've got double vision."

LETTERS

(Letters addressed to the Editor, unless specifically marked otherwise, may be considered for publication.)

BOMB RISKS

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—If Lord Chandos wished his article to be a serious contribution to the "East is West" discussion he should surely not have evaded one of the most serious objections to the nuclear deterrent thesis by dismissing the irradiation danger from H-bomb tests with the complacent and unsubstantiated statement "The weight of scientific judgment is that this danger is negligible."

Who are these scientists, apart, perhaps, from Government puppets, who think the danger is negligible? I, for one, should dearly like to know.

Yours, etc., D. M. JEPSON
Old Heathfield, Sussex

NUCLEAR PIONEERS

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—For Bernard Hollowood's researches into earlier work on nuclear physics may I draw attention to the gap between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter in the series of planetary distances? In this gap are the asteroids, which some believe to be the fragments of a planet that broke up.

Do you think it possible that inhabitants of the missing planet developed a skill in the release of atomic energy somewhat in advance of our own attainments in that respect? Their experiments would have had a very neat ending: all out with a bang and no one left to whimper!

I am, sir, Yours, etc.
F. H. E. TOWNSEND-ROSE
Osterley, Middlesex

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT

SO many people these days are saying so many times how nice a man Mr. Heathcoat Amory is that he must be finding the repetition embarrassing. Perhaps he is longing for someone to hate him. "Gentlemen of the jury," F. E. Smith is alleged to have once said, "my client looks like an idiot and he talks like an idiot and he behaves like an idiot. But, gentlemen of the jury, do not allow yourselves to be deceived. Gentlemen of the jury, my client is an idiot." So, when the popular press and the unpopular press and the Conservative Party and the Boy Scouts and the Socialist Party and the Liberal Party all unite to say how nice a man Mr. Heathcoat Amory is and how decent of him it is going on moving up from higher to ever higher offices when he would so much rather be playing with his pigs down in Devonshire, the most trustful cannot help being suspicious; and yet they are certainly wrong. He is a nice man. Who could doubt it as he shambled into the House only just in time, smacked Mr. Jack Simon who was answering a question on the bottom, and got up and made his Budget speech? Yet, though it was a nice man making it, it was not a distinguishing speech.

We are not in this column concerned with its contents or absence of contents, but there was a lack of distinction of phrase and he read his figures too fast, as if he was sometimes not quite sure what they were all about and did not want to give people time to notice. Mr. Macmillan had at one point to pull his coat-tails in order to slow him up.

The debate which started in this undistinguished fashion did not quickly recover. Recent developments may have livened up by-elections. They have not yet succeeded in livening up the House of Commons. By Wednesday everyone

had given up even trying to talk about the Budget, but, alas! they did not succeed in being entertaining merely by being irrelevant. It was by general consent the dullest day that Parliament has ever had since Simon de Montfort. There was neither coherent policy for the present nor prophecy for the future—except indeed for Sir David Eccles' monumental prophecy that it is "not improbable that the American recession will come to an end sooner than seems likely"—surely one of the strangest sentences ever uttered in English oratory. The moving moment of the debate was Mr. Maude's sad farewell speech, in which he took the two parties roundly to task, accusing them both of being Conservative restrictionists and of killing debate by the multitude of skeletons that each was determined to keep hidden in its cupboard. The Liberals sat on their bench complacently listening, accepting this tribute to what they had been saying all along and reflecting perhaps that they were coming and not going. Dr. Dalton told Members that if they smoked less they would live longer, but the ghost of Lord Melbourne, one could not but feel, must have been lingering in the Peers' Gallery and softly asking whether that would be altogether an advantage.

Thursday was, to be fair, a little more lively. Mr. Maudling knocked about. He even at one point knocked off a glass of water from the Table—which is quite an event for the House of Commons. But he was so keen on demolishing Mr. Harold Wilson's contention that Government policy could make a positive contribution to production that he left himself wide open to questions from Mr. Grimond, Mr. Gordon-Walker and Sir Robert Boothby as to why then should there be a Capital Issues Committee or Imperial Preference. His answers here were very halting and unconvincing. Sir Robert Boothby is not an inhibited man and he laid about him in good independent, expansionist fashion, approving here and rebuking there. He was so lively and amusing that no one noticed that he, alone of all the speakers, was talking about the subject of the debate.

It's this retrospective dividend stripping that is going to give all the trouble.



The trouble, it need hardly be said, is not between the Government and the Opposition. No Government ever minds being opposed by the Opposition, but the Opposition in this case is all for the Government. It is its own back benchers who are against it. There was some murmuring on the floor, and a forthright statement from Sir Robert Boothby which it would be an insult to describe as murmuring, but as usual with Parliamentary crises, what happens on the floor of the House is merely the tenth part of the iceberg that appears above the sea. All that really mattered was going on behind the scenes in committee rooms and smoking-rooms and elsewhere, where it was being settled whether the Government was to climb down or not. One sometimes wonders why in Houses of Parliament it is necessary to have a debating chamber at all. PERCY SOMERSET

NOTICE

All Demonstrations by Strangers in the Gallery are out of order and must be treated accordingly.

"Some time ago Musya, a 17-year-old Beduin girl of the Arev el Masarev tribe, refused to marry a member of her tribe, refused to marry a member of her tribe, and ran off to Jordan with her lover, Muhammed, from another tribe."

The Times

Third time lucky.



BOOKING OFFICE

Thackeray in Love

Thackeray : The Age of Wisdom. 1847-1863. Gordon N. Ray. Oxford University Press, 55/-

THIS second, and concluding, volume of Professor Gordon Ray's definitive biography of Thackeray is even more enjoyable than its predecessor, *The Age of Adversity, 1811-1846*. Here we have Thackeray as a successful man, and Professor Ray very skilfully handles the difficult biographical material provided by an author and journalist with a complicated social life. The book also contains a full account of Thackeray's relationship with Mrs. Brookfield, a story of considerable interest.

Thackeray's wife, it will be remembered, had suffered from increasing melancholia until it became necessary to put her under restraint, a state in which she continued to live long after the death of her husband. Thackeray was therefore a man who had suffered in his domestic life appalling strain, not only emotional but also financial and administrative, in grappling with the situation in which he found himself and his children.

It was not surprising in the circumstances that the Brookfield predicament should arise, but its course was curious and is, as it happens, comparatively well documented.

William Brookfield, a young man of somewhat humdrum origins, but accepted charm and brilliance, especially as a raconteur, had been steered by his family into Holy Orders. He had been a friend of Thackeray's at Trinity, Cambridge, and married, in the face of some opposition owing to his lack of means, Jane Elton, daughter of a baronet. The Elton family (of Clevedon Court, near Bristol, where Tennyson used to stay) knew Landor, and Jane's sister married Henry Hallam, the historian, so that experience of the ways of literary men was not lacking.

The lonely Thackeray began by renewing his undergraduate friendship with Brookfield. Soon it became a

weekly fixture that he should have a meal at the Brookfield table. Brookfield acquired various preferments, but settled down early in life as a disappointed man of ironic humour, becoming, like Matthew Arnold, an Inspector of Schools. The inevitable happened and Thackeray fell desperately in love with Jane.

Reading of the Victorians, one for ever wonders how the English can have achieved a reputation for concealing their feelings. There is hardly a distinguished man of the epoch who does not seem to have gone out of his way in a greater or lesser manner to trail the pageant of his bleeding heart. Thackeray was no exception, and, although there seems on the face of it every reason to believe that the relationship was from first to last platonic, the whole

of London was made aware of this *amitié amoureuse*.

No one can ever know the truth about such triangles, but Brookfield seems to have treated his wife too often with jocular asperity and to have disliked conjugal endearments; Jane, although she lived to a great age, was much of the time a near invalid; Thackeray was enchanted by her beauty and in any case in a position to fall victim easily enough. The depth of his passion is certainly to be measured by the fact that, although there were other sentimental friendships, no one ever took Mrs. Brookfield's place in his heart.

Brookfield eventually—and not unnaturally—grew tired of this entanglement, in some ways perhaps more trying for a husband than a frank liaison. He deliberately broke it up, a step in which Mrs. Brookfield acquiesced. Thackeray was shattered; but to the end of his life he returned intermittently to thoughts of Jane. Mrs. Brookfield herself, in spite of an attractive drawing of her by Thackeray reproduced here, remains an enigmatic character. One can sympathize with Thackeray or with Brookfield: Jane somehow fails to win the reader's warm regard.

These matters naturally have bearing on the way Thackeray wrote, and Professor Ray has much to say that is of interest about *Esmond* and *The Newcomes*. He also quotes an admirable sequence of passages from *Pendennis*, demonstrating Thackeray's skill and humour in describing a handful of people and emotions with energy and economy.

All the same, Thackeray remains a bit of a mystery. It is hard to imagine what he would have been like in our own day. Dickens, Trollope, they can be estimated in some degree; but Thackeray's characteristics, his hesitations and his outbursts, seem essentially of his own age. He worked for *Punch* during this period, resigning in 1851 because he disapproved of the cartoon showing Louis Napoleon as "A Beggar on Horseback."

ANTHONY POWELL

NOVEL FACES



XIII—NEVIL SHUTE

*Readers go Round the Bend, there's no dispute,
And In the Wet slide smoothly down the Shute.*

BLOOD COUNT

FROM a not very large accumulation let's take these six: four thrillers, two whodunits. (Among the others were at least two more whodunits, but I found them insupportable after the first twenty or thirty pages. Even in this kind of thing one demands a certain literary ability.)

A Scent of New-Mown Hay. John Blackburn. *Secker and Warburg*, 13/6. Thick-ear, fast-car, film-script thriller about vegetable menace deliberately spread; central character a young biologist from English provincial university. One or two conscientiously hoked-up love-scenes (e.g. with wife just out of bath), but the style has faint, endearing echoes of Sapper and Edgar Wallace. Carefully plotted, but . . . (see blurb) *credible*?

Night of the Horns. Douglas Sanderson. *Secker and Warburg*, 12/6. Hardworking sexy hit-and-run thriller about a lawyer in New Mexico blackmailed into smuggling a million dollars over the border. Sexual betrayal, murder, pages of beatings lovingly described by the victim, and a plot that proves at the end to have been exactly constructed, in spite of the violence and (between the sexy scenes) breakneck pace.

The Amazing Mr. Lutterworth. Desmond Leslie. *Wingate*, 12/6. Pursuit story (N.Y. to L.A. and back) with mystical overtones, breathlessly told in the historic present. British narrator is in possession of a secret something that will save the world, but has lost his

memory; will they catch him and kill him before he remembers who he is and gets it to the right place?

Dr. No. Ian Fleming. *Cape*, 13/6. James Bond goes through it again, in a little island off Jamaica. Technical details about guns, drink-mixing, murder, clothes, torture, and interior decoration, and wish-fulfilment love-scenes with a beautiful ash-blond girl Tarzan (including one while he holds her slung over his shoulder by one leg), before he leaves the master-mind villain buried under a mountain of guano.

The Long Farewell. Michael Innes. *Gollancz*, 12/6. Appleby among the Shakespearean scholars; forgery and murder. The old purely artificial puzzle, essentially untouched by character, emotion or suspense, investigated and explained in stately, facetious, allusive dialogue.

The Finishing Stroke. Ellery Queen. *Gollancz*, 13/6. Wildly, absurdly ingenious puzzle—Ellery's second case, in 1929, not solved till 1957, and no wonder—of a house-party murder led up to by elaborately contrived symbolic threats. Playful manner, immensely thorough period detail, and the usual show-off culture full of impressive words used just slightly wrong.

R. M.

The Conscience of the Rich. C. P. Snow. *Macmillan*, 15/-

The seventh in the series of linked but independent novels, *Strangers and Brothers*, is one of the most continuously interesting. It explores the background

of Charles March, the lawyer turned G.P. who has made short appearances before. The period is the 'thirties, with their slowly ripening political passion; the setting is the Jewish aristocracy, the great banking families now living on the past. The central character is Leonard March, an exhibitionist patriarch from whose possessive love both his children have to escape.

Lewis Eliot continues to have ample time for those evening walks with his more overwrought friends, and there are the usual reminders of material explored in other parts of the sequence, the Law, politics, and Cambridge. Least apologetic of novelists, Sir Charles strides firmly forward, although for once he does allow himself a helpful introductory note. One of the most refreshing things about these very original books is their acceptance of the fight for power as a fact to be taken into account in understanding the world, not something to be hidden rosily away in a cloud of indignation.

R. G. G. P.

Life's a Gamble. F. H. Cripps. *Odhams*, 25/-

It is scarcely Colonel Cripps' fault that passages in his autobiography suggest satire on a gossip column, for he has mixed with the internationally famous all through a long life that would have offered a rich plot to Edwardian musical comedy. Here is someone refreshingly delighted at being born to a silver spoon full of hunting, shooting, fishing, crazy wagers, gay friends and historic binges. And yet his aunt was Beatrice Webb. He took part in the last cavalry charge, and won two D.S.O.s. Before and after the Revolution he was an enterprising merchant banker in Russia; later he became a dock manager at Liverpool, on the best of terms with the stevedores.

His book has been carelessly edited—it repeats itself—but it is full of good stories, and its reflections of Edwardian irresponsibility, presented with enormous gusto, make rather splendid reading. Colonel Cripps emerges as a likeable character, and in nothing more than his affectionate appreciation of his brother Stafford.

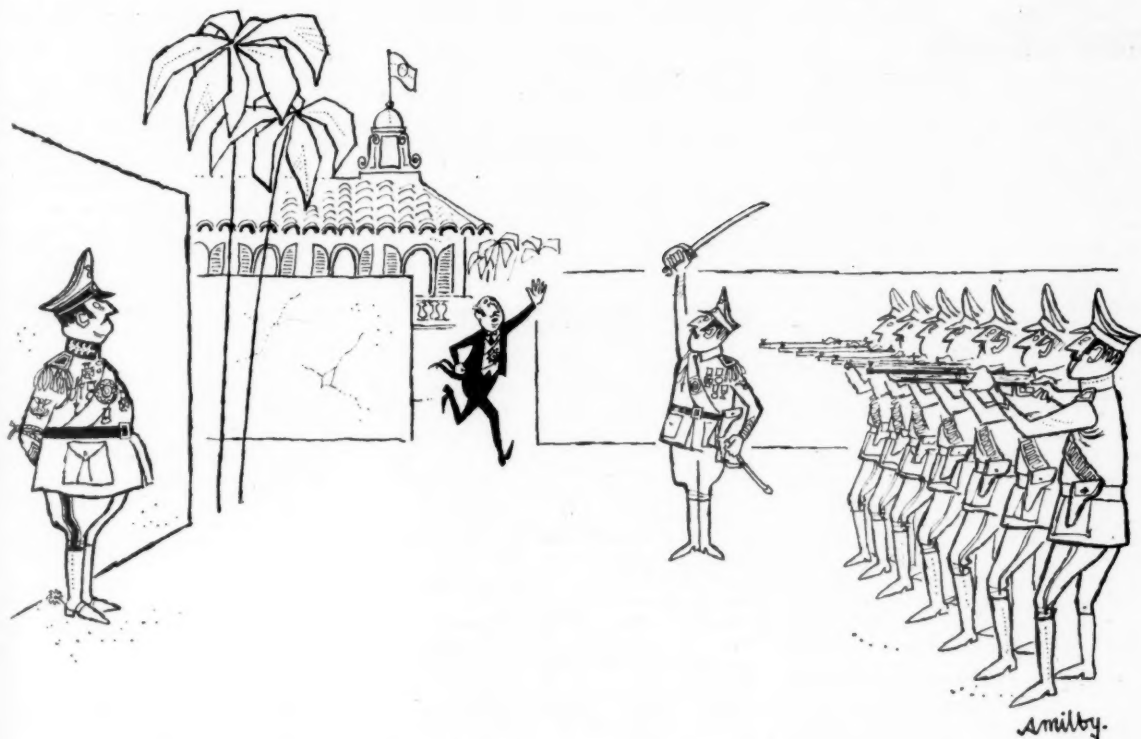
E. O. D. K.

The History of Fanny Burney. Joyce Hemlow. *Oxford University Press*, 35/-

The author's years of research in the Burney papers (some 8000 letters and journals) create an instruction rather than an entertainment, which is not to deny pleasure in this impressive *tour de force* of definitive biography. Nothing now remains but for sides to be taken about this novelist whose fame is largely due to longevity (1752-1840) and a passion for recording everything directly and indirectly related to herself and her family.

Miss Hemlow dispenses with speculative commentary and concentrates on the staggering, almost suffocating, volume of fact. Fanny's early success, in her twenties, as a pert novelist suggests a parallel to Mille. Sagan's celebrity, and





"Hold it—he's been re-elected on a recount."

all that sitting in the dark alone with the doctor, chatting about the next book, makes one think. Also worthy of speculation is Fanny Madame D'Arblay, a good stoical woman keeping husband and son from going to pieces, whose courage, certainly undeniable, does bear traces of quite insufferable vanity. Miss Hemlow ventures no opinion about Fanny's obsessive cult of the family, a morbid preoccupation which might strike a Freudian as rather unhealthy. Indeed there is a lot to Fanny, and more than facts: one would welcome an investigation into the reasons why. K. D.

The Man from Devil's Island. Arthur Calder-Marshall. *Rupert Hart-Davis*, 15/-

Those whom too much introspective and erotic fiction has aged before their time may find relief in reading this book, which sounds as though it might be about Dreyfus but is not. It is about a Creole brother and sister on Trinidad and their English school-fellow guest. They find on the shore an escaped ex-prisoner who has paddled a mere six hundred miles from Cayenne where there is no work and where he is condemned to starve for as long as his original sentence. If discovered he will be sent back or out to sea in a home-made boat: the young folks resolve to save him.

Sucked by a vampire-bat, sent to

hospital, escaping again, he gives his friends plenty of trouble and refuses to implement a happy ending to a story, meant for the older young but highly suited to the younger old, told with humour, feeling, knowledge and including a most delicate sketch of the dawning of first love. B. E. S.

The World Unveiled. Paul Herrmann. *Hamish Hamilton*, 42/-

The successor to its author's *Conquest by Man*, this takes the history of exploration from Columbus to Stanley. A vast and patient survey, well illustrated and rounded off by nine pages of bibliography, it handles skilfully a mass of information about the equipment, adventures and political background of each of the classic expeditions. The motives of explorers are fascinating. Some have believed themselves the tools of God, others have clearly been fired by personal ambition, but common to all those covered here is a streak of ruthlessness combined with eccentricity. Nearly all have been treated with idiotic shortsightedness by their governments; but sympathy must be shared with their families and men, who have mostly had a terrible time.

Absorbing as is much of Herrmann's narrative, it is his curiosities that stick in the mind, and particularly Stanley's first-hand report of the most

famous conversation in the world. "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" "Yes," said he, with a kind smile, lifting his cap slightly." E. O. D. K.

Warden of the Smoke and Bells. Richard Llewellyn. *Michael Joseph*, 13/6

Would it be legitimate to write a story about Harold which made him win the battle of Hastings; or (as Baron Corvo once proposed) a story about Arthur of Brittany which made him escape from King John and conquer Jerusalem? If liberties of this order are permissible then *Warden of the Smoke and Bells* is a good book. For in this story of thirteenth-century Assisi, threatened by neighbouring Perugia, the little town is rescued by Marco Polo at the head of a body of Mongol troops.

Now the really fascinating thing about Marco Polo is that he came home and took up his duties as a Venetian citizen without mentioning his adventures; if chance had not made him a prisoner of war we should never have heard of his journeys. That he should throw his weight about in central Italy is psychologically more false than any mere factual inaccuracy. But if the reader can bear to meet Polo, Dante and Giotto, all behaving wildly out of character, he will enjoy this energetic tale of adventure, written in excellent prose. A. L. D.

AT THE PLAY

The Brass Butterfly (STRAND)

THERE is enough to be said in favour of *The Brass Butterfly* to make us sorrier than usual that as a whole it fails. The failure is full of promise, and includes scenes proving that William Golding, though in this first play he has not yet learned to make a story dramatic, can write clever comic dialogue and deal amusingly with a clash of ideas. He has made this play from one of his own long short-stories called *Envoy Extraordinary*, and in doing so has stretched it pretty thin.

It provides only one big part, that of a Roman Emperor grown tired and cynical, who would rather laugh than fight, and whose summer retreat is thrown upside down by the arrival of a single-minded Greek inventor armed with the steam-engine and printing and explosives and determined to revolutionize human life. The Emperor is a cunning and frivolous old-fashioned liberal who believes in *laissez-faire*; the zeal of the simple Greek to reform the world means nothing to him, and he

REP SELECTION

Bristol Old Vic, *Hamlet*, to May 17th.
Birmingham Rep, *Dagger's Point*, new drama, to May 10th.
Theatre Royal Windsor, *The Waltz of the Toreadors*, to May 3rd.
Wimbledon, *Odd Man In*, to April 26th.

waves all the inventions politely aside as lunacy except the first pressure cooker, which fascinates him as an epicure. The part is a gift for Alastair Sim, who plays it delightfully in the manner of an irresponsible old don whose life-work lies behind him and who is bent on pleasure for his remaining years.

The scenes between Mr. Sim and the distraught inventor are far the best; George Cole almost burns up his beard in frustration at his inability to be taken seriously, and one can nearly see the barbed wire of misunderstanding bristling at the centre of their conversations. This is good and original comedy; but unfortunately beyond it the play becomes much duller in a conventional attempt by his heir-designate to oust the Emperor and an ordinary little love-affair between his bastard grandson and the inventor's sister, a Greek pin-up girl badly handicapped by conversion to Christianity. The acting here is nothing remarkable, and the leisureliness with which these fringes of the story are told is emphasized by Mr. Sim's slow production. Several dramatic incidents are successfully planted, but they are isolated and the evening rolls on with dangerously little tension. Apart from Messrs. Sim and Cole, Jack Hedley shines as a Roman captain who knows his manual of drill

but is bright enough to see how silly it all is.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Not In the Book (Criterion—16/4/58), original thriller-comedy. . . *Any Other Business* (Westminster—16/4/58), exciting industrial whodunit. *The Dock Brief* and *What Shall We Tell Caroline?* (Lyric, Hammersmith—16/4/58), two new one-act comedies of great promise.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Desire Under the Elms *Thunder Road*

THE first half-hour or so of *Desire Under the Elms* (Director: Delbert Mann) made me less and less hopeful. A film adapted from a play almost inevitably shows its stage origin up to a point, because the original treatment of the theme, the way it unfolded in the dramatist's mind, cannot really be separated from the stage conventions and limitations within which he worked when first writing it: for it to be done in true film terms, the whole conception would have to be thought out again from the beginning, and the narrative completely recast. I don't think it's possible to repeat exactly in one medium an effect first made in another: you can't even "tell the same story," because any story in itself involves infinitely more subtleties and implications and moods than are conveyed by a plain statement of what the characters are like and what

they do and what happens to them, and the particular medium chosen influences all these things in its own way. Nevertheless, even bearing all this in mind, I had expected a version of Eugene O'Neill's play scripted by Irwin Shaw to be more of a film . . .

For this is so obviously a play. The flow and rhythm of the dialogue suggest the stage—and the director could not very well make or lead up to the necessary effects if it were taken at a more naturalistic, cinematic pace. The scenes too have an artificial air, particularly those in the open; and since this—considering what the most ordinary film can do nowadays—cannot be anything but intentional, the obvious conclusion is that it was decided on because convincing naturalism would have been noticeably out of key.

Thoughts of this kind distracted me for some time, making me regard the whole thing in a detached and critical way, until I was gripped by the basic, essential strength of it—the simple power, the inevitability of the approaching climax. Coveting his property, the new young wife (Sophia Loren) of the hard old New England farmer (Burl Ives) gives him a new heir by seducing the son (Anthony Perkins) he considers an unworthy weakling. Then, trapped by genuine love for the son, she sees no way to prove it to him, against his bitter suspicion, short of killing the baby who would otherwise disinherit him.

It is a theme of classic force, and the characters are tragic figures, larger than life. Mr. Ives's portrait of the harsh old tyrant dominates the film: notably, the



Anna—SOPHIA LOREN

Ephraim—BURL IVES

Eben—ANTHONY PERKINS

(*Desire Under the Elms*)

scene in which he wildly shows off his virility at the party to celebrate the birth is irresistible. Miss Loren too has far more chance than usual to show emotional range, and Mr. Perkins as the sullen, angry son does as well as anyone could with the least rewarding part. But it is the feeling of inexorable doom that fascinates.

Now for something far more cinematically interesting and, for that matter, more immediately entertaining, though far more trivial: *Thunder Road* (Director: Arthur Ripley). This is about what a stern off-screen voice describes at the beginning as "those wild and reckless men who transport illegal whisky from the still to the point of distribution" in the south-eastern states of the U.S.: the central character is "a transporter" in Kentucky.

Besides being wild and reckless he has to be a skilled driver of very fast cars, able to judge the exact moment when a spray of oil will skid a pursuer to disaster and the exact way to crash at ninety miles an hour through a six-foot gap between two other cars in a road-block. The film shows a good deal of this kind of thing, and very well done and exciting it is. The basic pattern of the story is fairly conventional, a matter of escaping the police and beating rivals in the business, and being dramatically rude to the smooth villain and tender to the worried girl and protective to the kid brother; but the details of life in a Kentucky county where "makin' moon" is an important, well-organized industry freshen it into something remarkably entertaining. The part of the dashing lawbreaker perfectly suits Robert Mitchum, and some of the subsidiary characters are quite memorable (including the kid brother, played by Jim Mitchum, his son). No depth, no message, no significance; it's like a gangster film with cars instead of guns; but in its way, it's good.

Survey
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Also in London: a delightful piece about Louis Armstrong, *Satchmo the Great*. The point of this is the relaxed, cheerful naturalness of Satchmo himself, not the jazz, which is used illustratively. The most distinguished film in London remains *The Seventh Seal* (19/3/58). The Curzon has a very attractive programme: the light-hearted Spanish fable *Calabuch* (16/4/58) and the wonderful wild-life documentary *From Blossom Time to Autumn Frost*. Giulietta Masina is touching and funny in Fellini's *Cabiria* (16/4/58). The intelligent spy story *Orders to Kill* (9/4/58) is still available, and, of course, *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57). Excellent new comedy, just a bit too long: *Teacher's Pet*—more of this next week.

Nothing very distinguished among the releases. *Gideon's Day* (2/4/58) is a quite

entertaining picture about the work of a Scotland Yard inspector, *Rooney* ("Survey," 9/4/58) is a simple, gay little Irish piece, and *The Tall Stranger* ("Survey," 26/3/58) is quite a good Western. RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

In Series

ON the face of it, Associated-Radiation's new historico-documentary programme, "Only Yesterday," seems to deserve a welcoming cheer. Much will obviously depend on the choice of subjects. For example, most viewers have surely had their fill by this time of massed Nazis chanting adoration at Hitler, and Bright Young Things doing the Charleston oblivious of the fact that in ten years' time, etc., etc. Our more immediate yesterdays so often tend to be presented on the little screen as drenched in the lengthening shadows of doom—as, heaven knows, so many of them were. I hope the present series will offer some sunnier sidelights now and then. The contemporary films of the Dublin Rising were gruesomely fascinating—but what a task for a producer, to make any kind of sense out of that tragic mess in fifteen minutes! A programme of this nature surely needs more room for development.

I did not find anything brilliant about the first story in "The Common Room" (B.B.C.), but the idea behind the series shows that somebody is once again trying to get off the well-worn rails. Television fiction series are apt to come under one of three headings: Variations on the Sexton Blake and Tinker motif; the Interminable Adventures of Thinly Disguised Chips off Old Mother Dale and Co.; or Sheriffs, Marshals and Wagons, Inc. There should be scope for a pleasing variety of themes among the denizens of this Common Room, both comic and serious, and I look forward to meeting them again. Whether they are recognizable as masters and teachers I am not competent to judge, but I'm prepared to accept them if their doings prove fresh and exciting. Terence Alexander, disguised to look something like Ronald Searle, seemed far more sure of himself as the art master than he has in some of his other recent television appearances.

"Starr and Company" (B.B.C.) has been ponderously slow so far, and I believe opportunities are being missed. I want to know more about the details of the manufacture of those buoys, for one thing: buoy-making is a part of modern life with which I am woefully unfamiliar, and I could stand a good deal more informative dialogue about it. As things are, my interest has no sooner been aroused than the scene changes and we're back in some moth-eaten routine about Flighty Typist ogling Nice Young Man from Drawing Office, with the dead hand of old Mother Dale waiting



VILMA ANN LESLIE VALENTINE DYALL
CHARLIE DRAKE

to fall at any moment. The Nice Young Man is most agreeably played, incidentally, by Brian McDermott.

Of "Drake's Progress" (B.B.C.) the most charitable thing I can find to say is that I hope it improves. Presumably some viewers find the character invented by Charlie Drake endearing. I find him acutely funny for an isolated moment now and then, and for the rest of the time embarrassing. He seems to derive from Chaplin, by way of Wisdom, with a touch of Stan Laurel; but something has been lost on the way, and I have found no difficulty in resisting his grotesquely babyish charm so far. I have nothing against pathetic waifs in whose faces pies are unjustly pushed, but I cannot accept a pathetic waif who looks like Billy Bunter with a blond wig and no glasses. Also, as Chaplin well knew, the pathetic waif, if he is to arouse our pity or laughter, should exist among recognizable human beings and not in a semi-surrealist vacuum.

Finally, a word of praise for the B.B.C.'s weekly "Gardening Club" (Midland TV Studio). Calmly and convincingly handled by Percy Thrower, this is an unflinching pleasure. I would blindly take Mr. Thrower's word about anything connected with the soil. What a shock it was to find that another gently persuasive gardening gentleman, on the rival channel, turned out to be advertising gadgets! Illogically, after that discovery, I found myself viewing all his hints with the gravest suspicion.

HENRY TURTON

AT THE THEATRE IN PARIS

Procès à Jésus (HÉBERTOT)—*La Dame de Trèfle* (GYMNASÉ)—*Ūbu* (THÉÂTRE NATIONAL POPULAIRE)—*Auguste* (NOUVEAUTÉS)—*Pommes à l'Anglaise* (THÉÂTRE DE PARIS)—*Madame Sans-Gêne* (SARAH BERNHARDT)—*Les Taureaux* and *Le Petite Femme de Loth* (LA BRUYÈRE)—*Oscar* (ATHÉNÉE).

THE Paris theatre is more French than it has been for some time. Its Anglo-Saxon wedge, healthily slimmed, is confined to *A View from the Bridge*, *Candida*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Caine Mutiny*, *Romanoff and Juliet* and of course *The Love of Four Colonels*, now almost as deeply rooted as the statue of Le Vert-Galant. On the other hand the shortage of serious plays is as evident as it is in London. Stage economics have grown dangerously shaky. There is even talk of closing one of the national theatres, and a recent survey points to an alarming dependence on subsidies. The big names are doing tremendous business, but managers appear increasingly shy of originality.

All the same, there are still plums in store, and no one need despair while such a play as Diego Fabbri's *Procès à Jésus* is packing the house. This unconventional piece asks perhaps too much of its audience, but remains extremely interesting. Have the Jews deserved their afflictions for their betrayal of Christ, or was He justly condemned? In the hope of discovering some lost facet of truth, a troubled Jewish professor goes on tour with his family, publicly reenacting the trial of Jesus in one-night stands.

During the first half the forms of law

were faithfully observed. In a makeshift court we heard counsel for Caiaphas and Pilate, we listened to the examination of Mary and Joseph and the testimony of apostles. Interrogation was savage, particularly of Judas, the evidence given very naturally, often movingly, but by the end of the act the professor had got no farther. Soon after the curtain went up again, however, the action spread like a prairie fire. A priest in the stalls rose to put his reasonable views, and was recruited for the stage. Barracking voices chipped in freely. Immediately behind me a voluble agnostic roared defiance, immediately behind our artist (and clocking him passionately on the head) a golden-hearted tart spoke up for Jesus (to the professional delight of Mary Magdalen on the stage), the four of us sealed off by blinding spotlights; and, most impressive, the theatre's ancient housekeeper came slowly forward to beg us to leave her Lord alone (this was Andrée Tainsy, an actress of rare distinction). And so the argument continued, until the professor, overwhelmed by the weight of public faith in Jesus, for the first time declared Him martyred.

Since the interruptions are all planted the formula is artificial enough to make us wonder how the witnesses acquired the details of the intimate life of Jesus.



Procès à Jésus

Elic, le président—JEAN MARIE-AMATO

But such is the power of the writing—a good translation by Thierry Maulnier—the acting, and the simple sincerity of Marcelle Tassencourt's production that the play is strangely exciting. It makes us think again, at least. A large and very able cast, sympathetically led by Jean-Marie Amato as the old professor.

Partly because it is a great relief to find a triangle play that is original, sensitive and unfacetious, partly because it is superbly acted, I much enjoyed *La Dame de Trèfle*, by Gabriel Arout. The idea is very simple, and beautifully worked out in a series of short scenes alternating between a boudoir and a brothel. In the first a desperate lover tries vainly to win a married woman who remains coolly faithful to her husband; in the second he finds uneasy solace with a girl so like her, though emotionally so different, that he is haunted by suspicion. Each denies knowledge of the other. The tricks by which he hopes to catch them yield no definite clue. As the girl falls more deeply in love with him, and he with her, his torture only increases. It is one of the strengths of the play, which is a kind of parable written with remarkable delicacy and economy, that we never know the answer. Finally he strangles Ada in the brothel, only to be told by Isabelle's maid that her mistress has left on a long journey. At what time? Ah, monsieur, unfortunately the clock has stopped! Madeleine Robinson's performances as both women are an extraordinary *tour de force*; so different, so alike. Michel Vitold—who



Auguste Roussel—FERNAND RAYNAUD

Georges Flower—GUY TREJAN

also produced—builds up brilliantly the man's gnawing perplexity, and Lucienne Bogaert plays the Madame with poise and wit, like a faded visionary kitten.

In the vast T.N.P. we were lucky to catch Jean Vilar's revival of *Ubu*, which has just burst on Paris and started a wave of Ubuisms in the press. First produced in 1896, it was written by a young journalist named Alfred Jarry on alternate gulps of soup and absinthe, so it is claimed. I gather that in the present version Ubu himself has been considerably softened, but he is still a grotesque clown figure of the successful bully—greedy, ruthless, dim-witted and unsinkable; given an outsize personality by Georges Wilson, much padded, he is in fact the nearest French equivalent to Punch, as Mère Ubu is very near, especially in the voice lent her by Rosy Varte, to Judy. Vilar has used his huge stage ingeniously in presenting the rough folk-comedy by which Ubu makes himself king before deciding he will have more fun as a slave. Very short scenes, strip-cartoon technique, coarse poster-paint dialogue, a large array of human caricatures and delightfully witty music from an absurd brass band.

Auguste, by Raymond Castans, seems to be the best new comedy, in the same class as *L'Œuf*. It rags very inventively the big bassoons of film publicity, and provides a delicious character study of one of those innocent, baffled little men the French understand so well. By rescuing a starlet from the Seine he



Père Ubu—GEORGES WILSON (Ubu)

upsets the grand strategy by which she was to be saved by a famous actor under the President's very nose, and instantly he becomes a national hero of the heaviest calibre. With millions quickly in the bank, the little man revolts against the plushy pleasures of "highlife" and orders his wizard of ballyhoo to do his magic in reverse. It is a very amusing play, full of delightful inversions, and in Fernand Raynaud, stammering, constantly astonished, it has found its hero exactly. Guy Trejan as the publicity agent oozes suave authority, and Jean Wall's production is wonderfully attentive to small illuminating quirks.

When Robert Dhery brought home his accomplished lunatics after *La Plume de ma Tante*, they set to work on their impressions of the English. In fact the parodies of our surprising habits are the weakest part of *Pommes à l'Anglaise*, the rest being much funnier; like their opposite numbers, the Crazy Gang, these comedians are most lethal when untrammelled. The stranded passenger on a fogbound airport who takes off, with terrific sound-effects, on his revolving bow-tie; Pierre Olaf as a crooner who gradually turns into a baboon; the sketch of two civil servants loathing one another and slow-motioning at the same desk, these are only a few among many enviable turns. This revue is void of amorous treacle and consistently gay and disrespectful, and Dhery and his versatile wife, Colette Brosset, lead it most winningly.

Madame Sans-Gêne may be an acknowledged chariot for stars, but it seems a poor shop-window for the Barrault

talents. Napoleon goes through his tantrums, and the washerwoman become one of his synthetic aristocrats slaps her knees as the night grows later and the court intrigue more tortuous, but somehow the cogwheels always show. The audience adored it, and maybe my British phlegm was an obstruction. Although exquisite as ever, Madeleine Renaud lacks the breadth for the name part, and I felt it was a waste for Jean Desailly to thump about, however historically, as Napoleon. Simone Valere is marvellously decorative, Barrault a cold, polished Fouché. Pierre Dux has handled this great canvas commandingly, and Wakhevitch's sets give a striking impression of size and depth.

I cannot understand the French critics' delight in the two one-act musical comedies being shown together, *Les Taureaux*, by Alexandre Arnoux, with Jean Wiener's music, and *La Petite Femme de Loth*, by Tristan Bernard, with music by Claude Terrasse. I thought that tatty was the word for these ironic fantasies, and even that excellent actor Jacques Dufrilho appeared slightly lost.

And *Oscar*, which French friends assured me was rib-splitting, also disappointed. A new farce by Claude Magnier, it draws endless business from a confusion of suitcases, daughters and potential sons-in-law, but its triviality was partly redeemed by the hair-raising speed of Jacques Maclair's production, and by the dazzlingly agile performances of Pierre Mondy and Jean-Paul Belmondo. ERIC KEOWN



Catherine—MADELEINE RENAUD



Ada—MADELEINE ROBINSON

FOR
WOMEN



The Abominable Cloche

THERE are only two good words to be said for the cloche as a type of millinery: neat and tidy. The words against it are manifold, ranging from unbecoming to abominable. Yet here is the cloche again, cropping up after a blessedly long period of immunity. Here it is in prodigious profusion in all the hat shops—and looking, in the hat shops, deceptively attractive. It is only when the chosen cloche is taken home and subjected to the merciless candour of our dearly beloveds that it is seen to be the ugliest hat in the history of fashion—not excluding the poke-bonnet, which at least had the merit of completely concealing the plainest as well as the prettiest faces. The cloche bare-facedly reveals all; and all is almost always too much, particularly as the profile has no help from the hidden coiffure.

An entirely new 1958 species, the Chemise Cloche, is introduced by Otto Lucas. It is "a puffed cloche with more volume than before, losing the look of separate crown and brim, but merging into one new, exciting, fluid line." That is a description, but hardly an explanation. Why chemise? Chemise, an archaicism for vest, dropped out of the living language when lingerie became the elegance for underclothes. This year it has been



picked up again to describe the simple brevities with neither soul nor wit which are called chemise dresses: plain, straight, waistless, pleatless, collarless, shapeless shifts. The only explanation there can be for the Chemise Cloche is that it is a hat for wearing with a chemise dress. Even so, one is at a loss to understand the "fluid line." A fluid line is something which a cloche, essentially a close-fitting, ear-hugging, brow-searing piece of millinery, simply cannot have.

Some of the cloches of Simone Mirman are well-nigh egg-shaped, curving in at the nape of the neck and the brow, obscuring the ears; those of Claude Saint-Cyr have crowns and brims merging to make a straight and simple bell shape; while Rudolf has a cloche which tolls the bell with funereal sombreness in black organdie, a white floral tribute placed at the back. When such cloches were first seen adorning, or at least surrounding, the expensive faces of model girls, they appeared vastly chic and eminently desirable. Now that less ambitious cloches (including a mass-millinery version of the Chemise Cloche) are beginning to surround the inexpensive faces of average women the result is not happy. Unfortunately, the ubiquitous alternative to the cloche is the

Breton sailor, the hat which has happened again because it is the obvious accompaniment to the school-girlish jumper suits and sailor tops of some designers. The Breton is upturned all round and worn at the back of the head. It is winsome enough on those who have recently left school, but far too winsome on those of twenty or thirty or forty years on.

However, the fever for cloches and Bretons is such that it may well rage itself out before the year has climbed up into June. As we become more acclimatized to the rigours of summer the more romantic hats with undulating brims which have been included in all the model millinery collections will begin to blossom out. These are made of cotton fabrics, paisley prints, organdie, or of straw with silk-lined brims. They are pulled well down over the face, but their undulating brims give provocative peeps of the profile. They are big, but not very big. For Ascot and garden parties one can go the whole hat. Madame Vernier has romantic flights, air-borne on clouds of black net or spotted veiling. Otto Lucas has hats whose diameters measure in feet, not inches. One is made of fringed paper taffeta, layer upon petalled layer; another is covered—crown, brim, and all—with deep red roses. Very coarse trellis veiling helps the *al-fresco* effect of many of his garden-party hats; but for cocktails he uses either fine shadow veiling or beauty-spot veiling to cover "the basic nothing hat."

All these romantic confections will have their influence on lesser creations, less highly priced. So be of good heart: although the cloche tolls, it need not toll for you.

ALISON ADBURGHAM

Career Girl: 7 — Bus Conductress

ALTHOUGH some of the passengers may get in your hair, Remember that none but the brave deserve the fare, And that although you may see smarter people riding around in Bentleys and Cadillacs There is many a kind heart beating behind a face like a badillacs.

The Neighbour

OF Mrs. H. I tell.
She lived in Little Street,
Nor anywhere did dwell
A neighbour more compleat.

With feeding jammy tots,
And walking dogs about,
And filling coffee-pots
While woes were tumbled out,

And fetching fish for cats
And chasing laundrymen
And helping alter hats
Her days were full. And when

This busy bee so kind
Moved house, as people do,
The folk she left behind
Heaved an exhausted "Where!"

ANGELA MILNE

☆

Where Beauty Leads

BEFORE beginning my lecture on "The Path to Beauty" I must say how glad I am to see so many here to-day who are obviously in need of help on this subject. You all want to follow the Path to Beauty, but first it is my duty to warn you just where history teaches us that path may lead. To begin at the beginning with Helen of Troy, she was, as you will remember, bred by the Swan out of Leda, so no one could blame her for being bird-brained, but it was her beauty that led her along paths neither straight nor narrow. Kidnapped by Paris, she was shut up for ten years in besieged Troy. Homer frequently mentions her long stole, and though this may have been highest fashion when the siege began, by the time the topless towers of Ilium had been sacked and Helen re-imported to Greece, can any of us believe that long stoles were still being worn?

Then consider Cleopatra, who had finally to put an end to it all with an asp. Do you realize that both the heroes of her most famous romances were generals? Mark Antony was only a TV star *manqué*, a general born before his time, but Julius Caesar, like so many generals, was chronically addicted to writing. Not all the satisfaction of dominating Middle Eastern policy by the quality of her beauty could have repaid Cleopatra for

those domestic evenings when Cæsar read aloud his latest Commentary.

But to turn to practical matters, can I have a volunteer from the floor please? —no, Miss Goalen, I didn't mean you. Thank you, will you stand here and look at the audience? I can't promise that my advice will lead to your face launching a thousand ships, but a model yacht on the Round Pond would at least be something. First of all don't part your hair in the middle; a centre parting rivets the eye and a riveted eye never gets farther down. Next decide on the size and shape of your eyebrows; nothing is worse for a face than an undecided eyebrow policy. Go all out for eyelashes. Don't waste time trying to match cosmetics to your complexion, just decide what coloured blonde you are going to be and work out the details later. Take a good look at the shape of your mouth, think of the shape you most fancy and try to bring them together, bearing in mind that the lipstick that charmed in last summer's sun makes the wearer like Coco the Clown in this winter's fog. About your figure I can only say that you all have to do the best you can with the means at your disposal. I will ask the volunteer to walk back to her seat and you will see what I mean.

Don't walk as if you were pacing out a tennis court, don't stand as if you had just been hit between the shoulders, and don't sit as if you were riding a Shetland pony. The fact that we appear to be entering a recession in the Dors/Sabrina figure should lull no one into dreaming of gluttony and shapelessness. The various new alphabetical lines—please stop interrupting me, Miss Scott James—are all, as ever, to be hung on frames emaciated by fruit juice and starch-free rolls. As Helen of Troy and Cleopatra knew only too well, the Path of Beauty has always been an ascetic road to travel, and I hope these few hints will not lead any of you to a ten-years' siege, or to death from an asp brought in with the breakfast basket of figs.

VIOLET POWELL

☆

"VISITOR"

Covent Garden held a party for Mme. ELENA BOCHARNIKOVA, the director of the Bolshoi Ballet schools.

She is in London on a three-week visit. She sat next to a small orange juice in Covent Garden's Royal Box and confessed that the only English she knew was 'How d'you do?' and 'Goodbye.'"—*Evening Standard*

Well, orange juice can be pretty taciturn.



"Haven't you noticed anything, Lionel?"



In the City



Jam To-morrow

THE milk and honey (plus a little amber colouring?) which the Chancellor of the Exchequer sipped during his Budget speech did not symbolize the character of his proposals. They failed miserably to come up to this promise of generosity. They are modest, cautious, unemotional, unspectacular—in fact an epitome of the man himself.

It is precisely because he erred on the side of caution that Mr. Amory's proposals have met such a warm welcome in the City. The first criterion by which to judge this Budget is how far it will consolidate the recovery of sterling. It is only a few months ago that sterling seemed to be on the edge of a precipice. It was snatched from disaster by the severe measures taken last September. (The patient is still a little wobbly on his legs although he is taking larger doses of gold and dollar nourishment.) To maintain its recovery the foreigner has to be duly impressed—and he should be impressed by the austere and very orthodox nature of a budget which produces a revenue surplus of £364 million and keeps its concessions down to a meagre £50 million, about a third of what most of the pundits had been forecasting.

The other objectives to be secured by the Budget were to try to keep the cost of living down so as to help the climate in which the wages battle will be fought over the next few months. It had also to help industrial expansion but without producing inflation.

With so many targets to hit, the Chancellor was presented with an unusually difficult task, but even the most severe critic will admit that he has acquitted himself quite well, especially for someone who has been at the job for less than three months.

The changes in purchase tax will help to keep the cost of living down. The simplification in the structure of the tax will also avoid some of the economic and technical absurdities with which it was riddled. The electric stoves, for instance, which consume domestic fuel and which used to pay tax at 60 per cent have now been brought down to 30 per cent, while the oil-burning stoves which consume imported fuel and which used to be exempt now also pay 30 per cent.

The unification of profits tax and the somewhat higher depreciation allowances are the items that have pleased the

City most. They should lay the basis for future expansion of industrial output in Britain. They have the inestimable advantage of costing not a penny this year, though their call on the Exchequer will begin to mount in 1959. With the rate of turnover of Chancellors as rapid as it has recently been, Mr. Heathcoat Amory may well have been encouraged by consideration of the delayed incidence of the cost of these two concessions.

The beneficiaries from the reductions of purchase tax will mainly be found in the retail trade and among manufacturers of household goods. The Stock Exchange was behaving perfectly rationally when, on the day

following the Budget, it put up the price of such shares as G.E.C., A.E.I., Vactric, Gamages, Harrods and Woolworth. That is where a great deal of the substantial concessions made by the Chancellor will come to rest.

The beneficiaries of the profits tax equalization are far more widely spread. The main tax advantage will naturally fall on those companies which have tended to distribute earnings fairly fully. Imperial Tobaccos and such brewery shares as Taylor Walker were well in the van of the Stock Exchange rush last Wednesday. Last but by no means least, wine company shares were marked up on the port and sherry concessions. Gilbeys, Sandemans were well in the picture. In fact a "port to-day but jam to-morrow Budget"—and the jam can be spread fairly thick a year hence when we shall be a good deal nearer a General Election.

LOMBARD LANE



In the Country



Speed Trials

ADVANCE newspaper publicity on the London-Birmingham Motorway has put motorists in a rare state of excitement. As this project has only just turned its first sod and we have years before D Day, it might be as well to consider what happened when Hitler's Autobahns and Mussolini's Autostradas first opened, and prepare for the following:—

(i) Running out of petrol

At the speed you will not be able to resist, petrol will be fizzing through your carburettor like soda from a siphon (and the finish of it will make much the same noise). If you think fellow motorists are going to stop for you before the same happens to them you're crazy. They will be doing a steady 75 m.p.h., hoping their momentum will carry them to the next pump after they've run out.

(ii) Overheating

Announces itself in interesting ways, such as a swishing noise under the bonnet immediately followed by streams of water rising from the bonnet edges and spraying the screen (cause: your water hose has swelled up with steam like a balloon and split); or "Bells Across the Meadow" sounding from under your bonnet; a look in the mirror will show pieces of metal accumulating in your wake. By all means collect them as souvenirs, but do wait until they have gone

a dull red before picking them up. It is imperative in either case to ease off the motorway as soon as you hear the noise: any momentary incredulity that this could happen to you will cause the car behind to disintegrate yours still further.

(iii) His-8-h.p.-Dingbat—certainly—isn't passing—mine

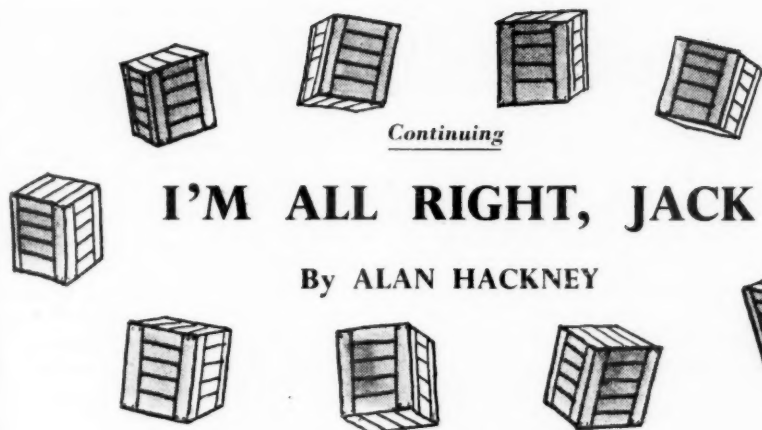
Neither of you is going to get a chequered flag over this, or a cup, but you will be able to talk it over and compare wrecks in the service station, if you are lucky. Experience on Autostradas proves that the only gainers over this sort of thing are garages and the purveyors of speed kits that convert your innocent product into a Q-ship with two carburettors, quick-lift camshafts, 9-to-1 compression, high axle ratio and so on. In time this gambit cancels itself out.

(iv) No Advertising Hoardings on the Motorway

If you add the facts that there will be few highway signs either, no blondes in overalls leaning on petrol pumps (because such things will be clover-leaved out of sight), what have you got left to look at? Scenery will flash past too fast to focus on, so your eyes will have but the road ahead to follow. Your eyes will close.

As one road sign puts it—"YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED."

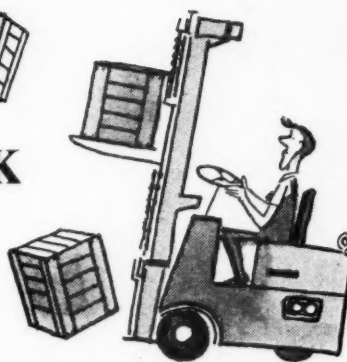
RUSSELL BROCKBANK



Continuing

I'M ALL RIGHT, JACK

By ALAN HACKNEY



Stanley Windrush has just got a job at Missiles Ltd., on the advice of his Uncle Bert-ram, after failing at the Foreign Office, where he had met Wallace Hardy-Freeman.

AT five past eight the following morning, the only occasion during his employment at Missiles Ltd. when he arrived before time, Stanley came into the main gate of the factory.

When he had clocked in he made his way to the Stores Block.

"Mr. Morris?"

"Yes, lad?"

"I was to report to you. My name's Windrush."

"Oh yes. I got you down for a fork-lift. I'll get Vince Knowles to show you the controls and that." He came out of his little indoor shed and called: "Knowlesy!"

A man of about forty appeared.

"Ow goes it, Knowlesy?" asked Mr. Morris. "New bloke here. Give him the lowdown, boy. 'Ta."

Mr. Knowles led Stanley away down the building to where a number of electric fork-lift trucks were lined up. Several were moving off to speed the export drive, but the drivers of most of them were clustered round the doors of the building enjoying an unofficial smoke.

"It's dead simple," explained Mr. Knowles. "You got your forward and reverse here, and that's the lever for lift. You get the forks in the old palette and lift. The only thing, you got to plug in the old charger every evening when you knock off. The mechanic won't do it, that's not his job."

"What is his job?"

"——d if I know," admitted Mr. Knowles frankly. "They never seem to go wrong. And we're on a shared bonus, so don't go working your guts out. Get your schedule from old Morris and I'll see you back here."

Stanley got his schedule and came back.

"Ah, you're on Number Four Block with me. When the stuff comes off the line and gets crated you stack the crates



Knowlesy

up the far end for the lorries. I'll show you. You use that one. Take the plug out and hang it up and follow me."

"What's in the crates?" asked Stanley.

"——d if I know," said Mr. Knowles. "They make all sorts of things here. You don't want to worry about that."

"It's all sitting down all day when you come to think of it," Mr. Knowles had said. "What you call a sedentary occupation."

In the afternoon Stanley and Mr.

Knowles had been shifting crates from the stacks in the Stores Block to lorries, and when Stanley had lifted a load he had inadvertently revealed a group of old workers playing poker and sleeping.

"Put 'em down again, Professor," advised Mr. Knowles. "Start further along."

"Why are they playing cards?" asked Stanley.

"They been superseded when we got mechanical handling a couple of years ago," said Mr. Knowles. "Old Kitey done a good job there in negotiation."

Stanley was relieved to hear this testimonial to their shop steward, Mr. Kite.

"You mean he got them kept on, I suppose?"

"That's right. Wouldn't 'ave them laid off. Very humane, 'e was. 'You can't sack a man just because he's redundant,' he told the boss. So they compromised."

"How?"

"Well, they took them on as extra checkers. Every one of us with a fork-lift does what three of them used to do, so there's a couple spare for each truck. It pays the company to keep 'em on the rest of their time as checkers rather than 'ave a stoppage. Only you don't want to rely on them to do any checking for you."

"Would there have been a stoppage?"

"Too true. Old Kitey would 've called a meeting."

"How?"

"Oh, he goes round blowing his bird-warbler. Then we all stop and convene."

"I see."

Stanley saw how right Uncle Bert-ram's advice had been. With this

sort of thing going on there was no doubt which was the profitable side to be on.

"Old Kitey isn't allowed to ring a bell or blow a whistle because it's laid down in the regulations he can't," explained Mr. Knowles. "And he can't play a musical instrument either when he's in the works, or he'd be in for it, but a bird-warbler doesn't count, being a recreational device."

Stanley got through the first day nicely, though after he had left the factory he was a little worried by the recollection that he had not plugged in his truck to charge the batteries.

He spent the evening with Wallace Hardy-Freeman, visiting Wallace's clubs. Wallace's choice of clubs did not meet with the approval of the Office. They were selected entirely on the basis of the availability of dancing and hostesses. They ended at the Siamese Cat, a place where Wallace could chatter away to the girls of his yearning to go back to Bangkok.

"Come on, Stanley," he urged. "These Siamese girls are better than cabs. They don't have to ask Daddy."

Even more interesting than the Siamese girls was a sudden glimpse of Uncle Bertram talking with some men at a corner table. One of them was Mr. Mahommed.

"My Uncle Bertram's over there, Wallace," said Stanley. "I can't think what he's up to, but he's chatting with Mr. Mahommed."

"Showing him the town, I imagine," said Wallace. "What does he do?"

"I don't really know. He used to be a Brigadier during the war, but I've no idea what he does now."

"He looks as if he's up to something. Any idea what it is?"

"In the words of Old Knowlesy," said Stanley, "—d if I know."

They were late home, and Stanley clocked on well after time the next morning. The factory had been opened for nearly half an hour and had already achieved the dead appearance that meant that work had started. Clouds of tobacco smoke hung above the lavatories, where numbers of men on day-work were traditionally filling in the firm's time.

Stanley slunk with an attempt at invisibility into the Stores Block, but

no one seemed much concerned by his lateness. He spent five minutes in amiable conversation with Knowlesy.

A big man with a moustache approached them.

"Blimey," Knowlesy said, "get a shift on. That's old Creepy Crawley."

Mr. Crawley was the foreman.

Mr. Knowles mounted his fork-lift truck and hummed busily away.

Stanley, with a nervous smile for Mr. Crawley, made to follow suit, but the vehicle seemed to lack all power. He remembered once more that he had not plugged in to charge the batteries.



The truck bore down at snail's pace on the foreman, who waved Stanley to a halt.

"May I make a suggestion?" said Mr. Crawley. "Put that back where you got it and plug it in. Get another one. Only for Pete's sake stop rushing about like that or you'll drive me stark raving bonkers."

Stanley reversed his vehicle interminably towards its plug. Mr. Crawley watched the whole business with considerable impatience.

"You don't want to look so worried," he said. "I'm not stop-watching you,

only have some consideration for my state of health. Gorbimey, I dunno."

When Stanley finally arrived to help Knowlesy he asked "Why couldn't the mechanic have plugged my truck in if he saw the plug was out?"

"I told you," said Knowlesy, "it's not his job. It's a question of demarcation. He daren't touch it."

"But I thought we workers were all solid together?"

"'Aven't you 'ad no education? He's in a different union, the Amalgamated, so we can go and take a running jump as far as he's concerned, and so can he take a running jump as far as we're concerned in the General. Otherwise someone might be out of a job and it might be me."

"I see."

"Any case, 'ow 'd they go on for wage claims? If the Amalgamated gets a rise, the General press for a rise too, so's to maintain parity. Otherwise we wouldn't none of us get a rise."

"You sound like an active union member."

"Active? No, I leave that to people like Kitey who can talk the lingo. I never know what they're on about half the time. Nor do most of the blokes. Suppose we want another fivepence an hour and the management say they can't pay. You'd reckon that was simple enough, wouldn't you? But no. You listen to the general secretary when 'e's on the telly next time, makin' a statement. You can't make 'ead or tail. They go on about referring the prior recommendations for discussion on joint procedure and all that there. No, Stan mate. You pay your dues on Friday and buy your raffle tickets and leave all that caper to Kitey and them. They understand it."

"Oh, I thought it was just me who didn't understand it."

"Oh no, mate. There's only Brother Kite understands it in this shop."

"I've been recalled to the office," said Wallace Hardy-Freeman. "My reposting has been postponed."

"Bad luck," commiserated Stanley. "But why's that?"

"It appears H.E. in Bangkok's not all that keen to have me back just yet. Anyway, they seem to be short of a Charlie to take these coloured gentlemen around, and they've put me down for it."

"Is that wretched Coloured Conference still on?"

"Heavens, yes. Oh, and a jolly surprise for you. The day after tomorrow I'm going round with one party who are going to have a look at Missiles Limited."

"God forbid. I didn't know anything about that. Of course the management never tells you anything. I suppose they'll stop for little chats with the workers and ask them questions."

"Oh, I imagine so. They're mad keen on information."

"Well, I hope they don't ask old Knowlesy anything. He always gives the same answer."

In the afternoon the delegates from the Coloured Conference came round. Missiles Limited was a large, sprawling place and the management staff accompanying the delegates was soon exhausted by the tireless inspecting and questioning, and the lengthy discussions in foreign tongues held by most of the delegates with technical advisers they had brought with them.

Stanley was uncomfortable about it. If Mr. Mahommed, the Indonesians, the Sikh and the Etonian Burmese were among the party he wanted at all costs to avoid them. There had been some delay over his afternoon schedule, which allocated him to the avenue of lathes in the main turning shop. Missiles were doing a large contract for flywheels, and Stanley's fork-lift truck was to carry those which had been completed from the lathes to stacks for crating. This meant that a stout prong had to be fixed to the front of the truck, but when Mr. Kite was consulted he ruled that the job should be done by one of the mechanics.

"We got no one free for another half-hour," objected Mr. Crawley.

"Oh, if there's no one available," said Stanley, "I could quite easily bolt it on."

"If you was to do that, lad," said Kitey, "you'd 'ave the Amalgamated down on you like a ton of bricks, and all our lads'd refuse to work with you."

"Just for that?"

"Ain't you got any principles?" asked Kitey. "It's neither right nor fair, taking work that doesn't belong to you."

Mr. Crawley went off, muttering, to arrange for a mechanic.

"You got to keep it strict in front of old Creepy, you know," said Kitey in a friendly tone. "You know what the boss-class is like. Give 'em an inch and they take a mile."

"Oh, of course. Sorry."

"Very difficult getting the boys to toe

conscience and the ballot box, as they say. Only I did happen to hear in a roundabout sort of way that you was given the push from the Foreign Office for sympathies with the Party."

"Yes, I'm afraid so."

Kitey nodded gravely.

"Typical," he said. "Typical."

He shook his thin head sadly.

"You might be interested in some books I've got at home," he went on. "I spend a good deal of my spare time reading, you know. Not like some people."

"That's very good of you."

"No, it's a pleasure. Drop in after work."

Mr. Kite went off, and Stanley stood despondently at the door of the shop waiting for the mechanic. In the distance he could see the coloured delegates coming out of the canteen and going into the foundry. After twenty minutes they emerged, picking at their clothing where flying droplets of metal had singed it. One or two appeared to go home, but the remainder went resolutely on and disappeared into the Engine Fitting Shop.

When the mechanic had fixed on Stanley's prong he reported to the lathes and was soon scooping up flywheels on it, taking them twenty at a time to the far end of the shop to be pulled off and stacked by two men called Chalky and Jimmo.

The work in the lathe shop was going on busily and smoothly but suddenly the whole tempo slackened. The high hum of the machines climbed down almost at once to a lower, slower tone and the practised movements of the operators became instantly more careful and studied. Chalky and Jimmo slowed their dexterous snatching-off of the heavy flywheels to a clumsy laboured heaving.

"What's going on?" asked Stanley, from the seat of his truck.

"Ain't you got eyes?" asked the man Chalky. "Look up the far end."

Through the door had come a brightly



the line sometimes," observed Kitey, offering a cigarette. "Do you indulge? They don't appreciate all the ins and outs of demarcation. You need education. But naturally you got to fight for that too. Mind you, I did happen to hear in a roundabout sort of way that you was at a college in Oxford. You don't mind me asking, do you?"

"No, not at all. Yes, I was."

"I was up at Oxford once," said Kitey.

"Were you really?"

"Oh yes. I went to a summer school at Balliol College one week in 1946. Very interesting. Very interesting too, the way the intelligentsia were sympathetic to the Party, you know."

"The Communist Party, you mean?"

Kitey winked.

"Now, now, Brother Windrush. My opinions are between me and my

clad group of the coloured gentlemen, accompanied by limping members of the management.

"Well, I'd have thought you'd work a bit faster if anything when you're being watched," said Stanley, "but everyone's slowed down to a crawl."

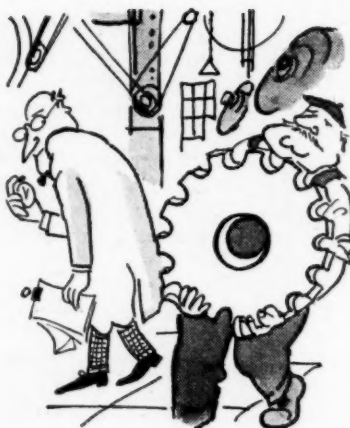
"What's up with you?" asked Jimmo. "We're on piece rates. You got to keep your eyes open. It don't matter about the supervisors, and it don't matter about that Bertram Mills outfit taking a look, but you never know who tags on to a party like that."

"Well, who might?"

"The time-and-motion bloke, of course," said Chalky. "They get up to all sorts of tricks, them blokes. When they reckon the rates are fixed a bit high they try to sneak in and stop-watch some poor unsuspecting geezer to try and see how long it really takes to do some movement. Only you usually get a chance to give the bloke the tip-off and he slows down. So what they do is, say, just walk through with the supervisor or someone, chatting away just as if they was too interested to do any timing, but all the time they got their pockets full of stop-watches, and next day you find there's a new rate for some jobs. So the only thing to do is *all* slow down while there's anyone you don't know passing through."

"You got to keep on the quivvy vivvy," said Jimmo.

"Mind you, if we was on day-work,"



conceded Chalky, "instead of piece-rates, I dare say a lot of people might work better when they're being watched, but nobody stands to gain by that, do they? You get a nasty atmosphere with the supervisory grades standing over you all day."

"Watch it," advised Jimmo, "here comes the Church Lads Brigade."

The inspecting group thus referred to had come a lot closer during this conversation and were now clustered round one of the lathes to watch a skimming operation. Stanley could make out everyone he had met at Mr. Mahommed's party and tried to slink by unobserved, but Wallace, who was standing on the fringe, the tedium of it

all showing in his face, caught sight of him with some relief.

"Wotcher, Stanley," he said, ignoring Stanley's frantic signals, "I've been looking out for you. There's a wonderful girl works here called Cynthia Kite. We were all inspecting her just now. She spends her entire time checking whether little injectors are a sliding fit or not, it seems. I'm surprised you've been a whole week here without noticing her."

"Really? Well, if old Kitey's her father I'm invited round to tea."

"Is that so? Here, wait a minute."

"No talking to the driver," said Stanley firmly, moving away, "or else the lads'll say I'm a creep."

He hummed and clicked back to Chalky and Jimmo with a fresh load.

"Bit of a creep, aren't you?" said Chalky, "talking to the bosses. Look at 'em. I dunno."

"Funny the way they got their shirts hanging out," observed Jimmo, "with the money they get. Be round again later, I expect."

But the delegates, many now D.C.L. (Oxon), had gone to tea.

(To be continued)

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